

GAME PREVIEW  
**Western Kentucky**

WHO TO WATCH  
**5 Blackshirts**

FAN'S GUIDE  
**Big 10 Travel**

THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE D

NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

# HUSKERS

ILLUSTRATED

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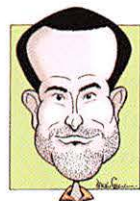
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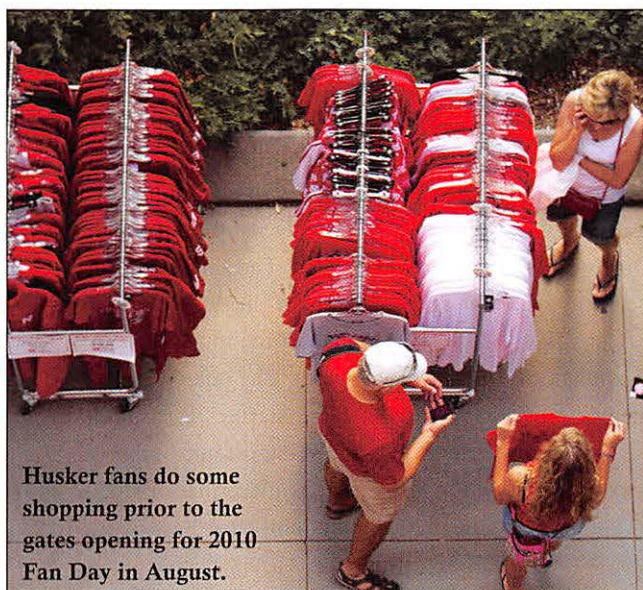
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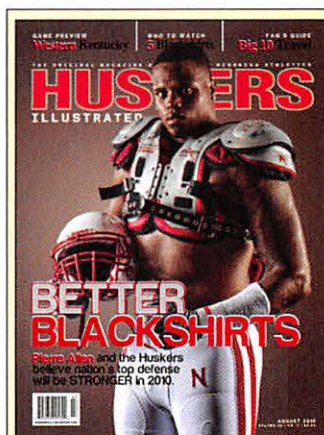


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## NEXT ISSUE

Volume 30, Issue 8, the Idaho preview and Western Kentucky recap, will be mailed Tuesday, Sept. 7. Check for updates at [huskiesillustrated.com](http://huskiesillustrated.com).



## HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

### ON THE COVER

Bo Pelini has the Blackshirts believing they will be even better than a year ago, despite the loss of All-American DT Ndamukong Suh. Last year's defense led the nation in scoring defense (10.4 points per game), ranked second in sacks per game (3.14) and finished first in pass efficiency defense. If the defense will be better, we should be seeing great things from guys like **PIERRE ALLEN**.

Photo by Randy Hampton



## FINDING A QUARTERBACK

Championship hopes rest on QB decision

**HEAD COACH BO PELINI** has grown tired of the questions. Reporters are tired of asking the questions. Nearly every player on the initial 105-man roster has been asked for insight and opinions.

And while players and coaches insist no starting positions have been locked down, no race has garnered more attention than the battle at quarterback. The competition started as a three-man race between returning starter and senior Zac Lee, sophomore Cody Green and redshirted freshman Taylor Martinez.

Nothing has changed, we think.

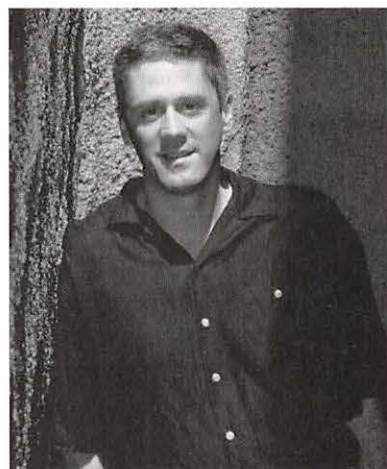
That's because as of late August, no light had been shed on the topic. I wouldn't expect any news anytime soon.

Asked late in fall drills when he would announce a starter, Pelini replied, "When is the first game?"

Technically, Nebraska can afford to wait. Nebraska would likely beat Western Kentucky and Idaho with any of its three QB candidates. The same can't be said for its game at Washington against projected No. 1 draft pick QB Jake Locker, however.

Coaches insist that every position battle is equally important. The fact is that's not true.

Nebraska enters the season with championship aspirations, both Big 12 and BCS, and rightfully so. The Huskers are back in the pre-season Top 10 rankings for the first time since 2002. They have a roster stocked with experience and a favorable schedule to



make a championship run. They have a number of returners from last year's top-ranked defense, one of the best special teams units in the country and great coaching.

But they don't have a quarterback.

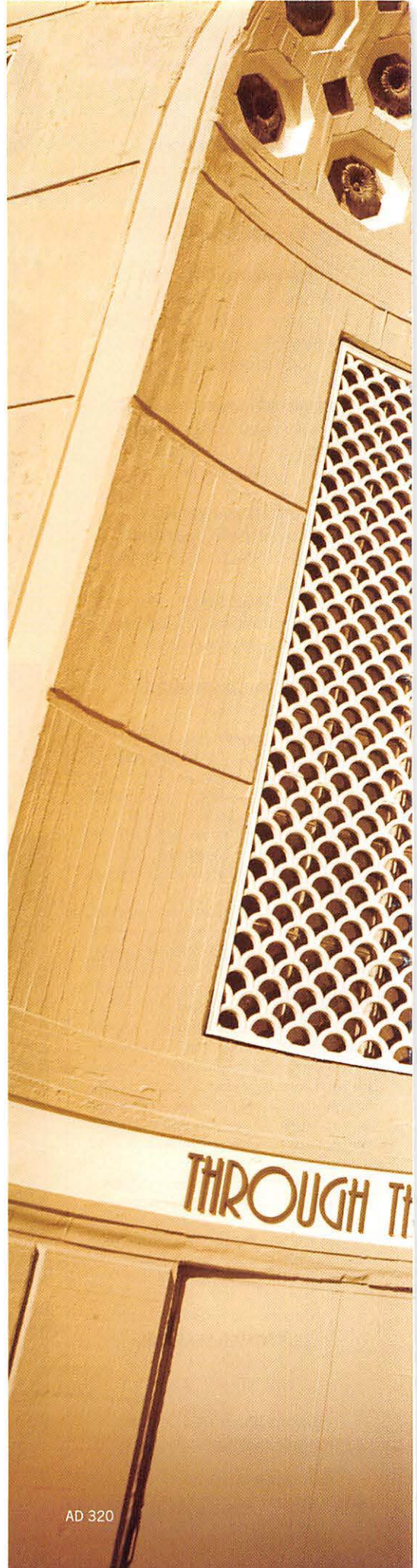
That's usually not a good sign. It traditionally means you don't have one guy that's good enough to win the job. Let's hope that's not the case.

I understand the value of competition and forcing guys to go head-to-head every day in practice. It forces players to compete every snap, every day.

But at some point, the team will need consistency – consistency in the huddle. The team needs to know who is calling the plays. The line needs to adjust to the style of the quarterback. The receivers need to adjust to the timing of the routes. The offense needs repetition with the starter. Repetition will be incredibly important, because while these three quarterbacks may run the same system, they have very different styles.

The competition needs to be settled soon. Because when a team starts playing multiple quarterbacks during the season, a competition can become a quarterback controversy. **N**

*Send me your comments or story ideas to [aaron@huskersillustrated.com](mailto:aaron@huskersillustrated.com).*







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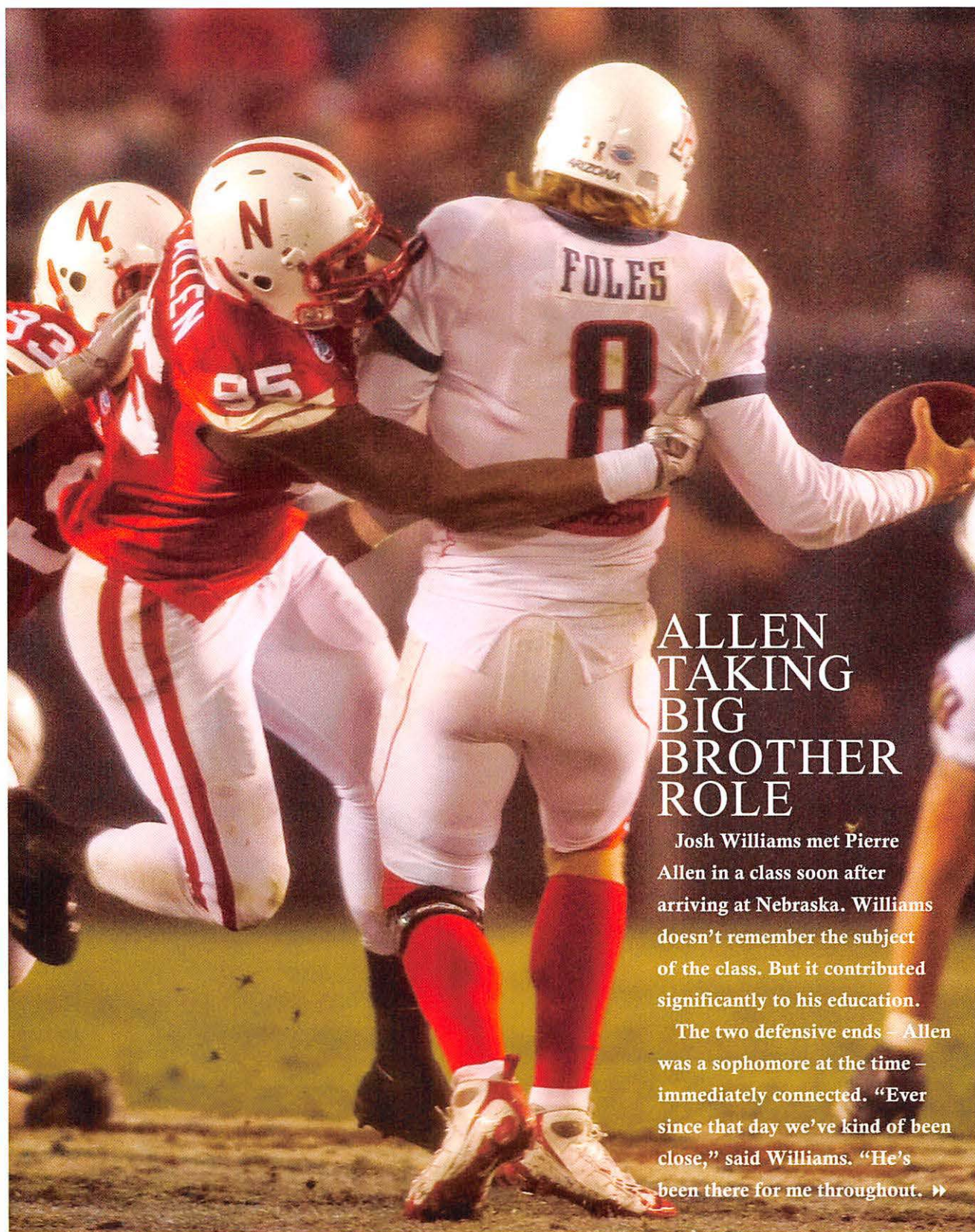
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## ALLEN TAKING BIG BROTHER ROLE

Josh Williams met Pierre Allen in a class soon after arriving at Nebraska. Williams doesn't remember the subject of the class. But it contributed significantly to his education.

The two defensive ends – Allen was a sophomore at the time – immediately connected. “Ever since that day we’ve kind of been close,” said Williams. “He’s been there for me throughout. »

AARON BABCOCK



"He's like a brother to me. I look at him as a mentor."

The big-brother metaphor works just fine for Allen, too.

Williams is a "young Pierre in training," Allen said. "Josh is a guy I work with personally."

Williams couldn't have picked a better role model. Allen stepped in when Barry Turner was injured two seasons ago and has started ever since. Last season, he was credited with 51 tackles, including 12 for losses and five sacks. He also had eight quarterback hurries.

Allen never missed a beat, compiling those numbers despite

## "HE'S LIKE A BIG BROTHER TO ME."

JOSH WILLIAMS

a series of injuries, including a painful turf toe that required injections before games and again at halftime, late in the season.

With Ndamukong Suh having moved on to the NFL, Allen is among those who have assumed leadership roles, and in his case not just on defense, where he'll likely be the only senior starter.

Like junior defensive tackle Jared Crick, Allen is out from under Suh's considerable shadow, and "I think he's poised to have a big season," said Williams. "He really worked hard this summer."

Williams has first-hand knowledge of that. He and Allen worked side-by-side in the off-season.

"I invested a lot in him, so I'm expecting big things out of Josh," Allen said.

The 6-foot-4 Williams, who played in only three games last season, weighs nearly 260 pounds now. He came to Nebraska at about 210, and the weight has come on slowly.

He has the size and strength, and he's becoming comfortable in the system. "You see him getting it," said Allen. "You just see him executing the plays. You can just tell he gets it now."

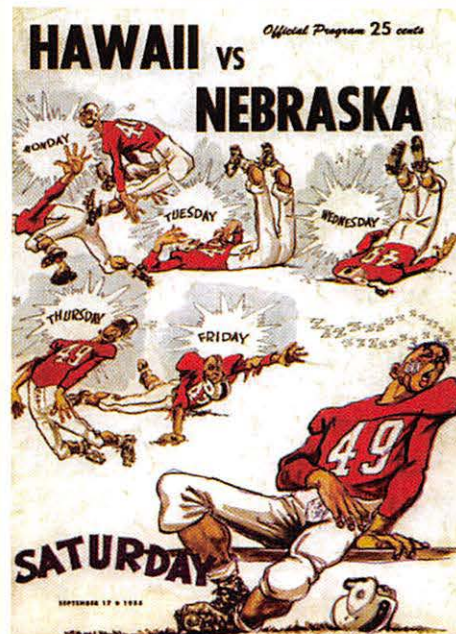
Even though Williams is a "quiet guy," according to Allen, his on-field demeanor is beginning to change. "I bark a lot on the field, so he's starting to bark, too," Allen said.

That's further evidence of Allen's big-brother mentoring.

He "barks a lot," said Williams. "He's a dog; that's what he is. It's a d-end thing."

### HI'S TOP5

## Forgettable Openers

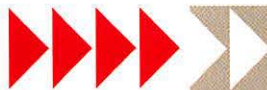


*Nebraska has lost only six season-opening games in the last half-century, and none since 1985. Three of the losses make this list of the most forgettable Husker openers in the modern era.*

- 1** **UCLA 20, NEBRASKA 17** } Sept. 9, 1972, Los Angeles – Pre-season No. 1 Huskers coming off back-to-back national championships, 31-game unbeaten streak, 23 consecutive victories.
- 2** **LSU 6, NEBRASKA 6** } Sept. 11, 1976, Baton Rouge – Huskers take pre-season No. 1 ranking to Tiger Stadium, a nasty place at night.
- 3** **IOWA 10, NEBRASKA 7** } Sept. 12, 1981, Iowa City – Huskers pre-season No. 7, Turner Gill's starting debut is four games away.
- 4** **WASHINGTON STATE 19, NEBRASKA 10** } Sept. 10, 1977, Memorial Stadium – Coach Warren Powers and Jack Thompson, the "Throwin' Samoan," shock No. 15 Huskers.
- 5** **HAWAII 6, NEBRASKA 0** } Sept. 17, 1955, Memorial Stadium – This one has to be somewhere on the list.



## NATIONAL RANKINGS



Nebraska was ranked No. 9 in the coaches' pre-season poll and No. 8 in the Associated Press poll.

"I don't care about those polls," coach **BO PELINI** said. "I don't pay attention to any of that stuff. It's pretty irrelevant to what we're doing, where we're going."

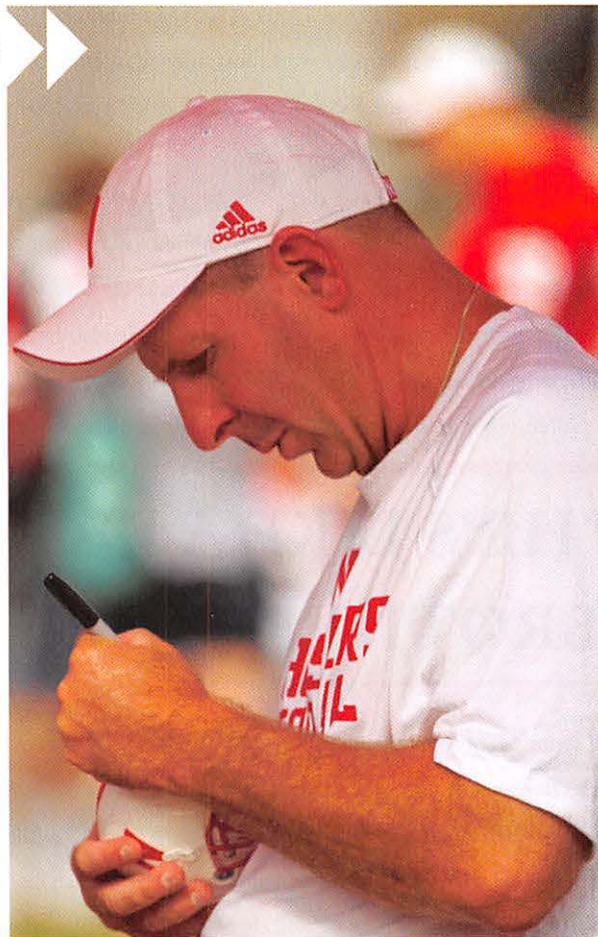
There is a benefit to being ranked in the Top 10, however.

"I guess it's pretty easy to move down if you screw up and lose early. But it's pretty hard if you start way out of there to move up if you have aspirations of doing something special," said Pelini. "That says something, I think, that people recognize we played pretty good

football at the end of last year, and they recognize us for that. That really doesn't have a lot to do with where we are now, what we have to accomplish. It's really something we're not in control of as a football team."

"All we can control is what we have to do on a daily basis. But that is a positive that we're up there a little bit higher than we have been in years past."

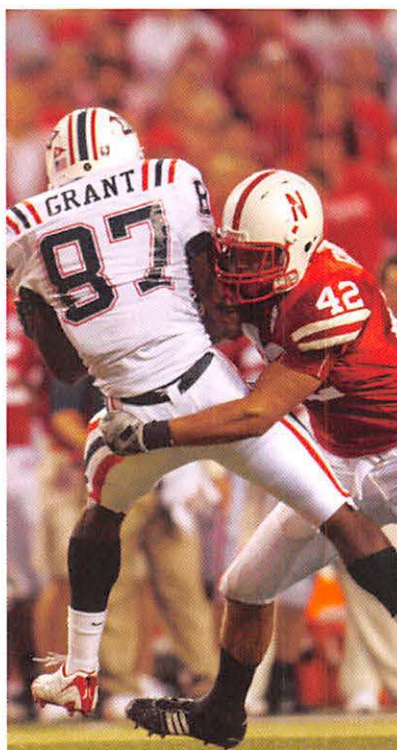
Nebraska was last in the AP pre-season Top 10 in 2002, when it was 10th. The Huskers finished the season out of the rankings. They haven't finished in the AP Top 10 since 2001 (No. 8).



## SERIOUS INJURIES

Senior offensive lineman **MIKE SMITH**, sophomore linebacker **SEAN FISHER** and junior cornerback **ANTHONY BLUE** were sidelined with season-ending injuries during fall camp. Smith, a two-year starter at left tackle, was moved inside during spring practice and was being counted on to provide depth in the line, with his ability to play all three positions. He suffered a broken leg. He could petition for a hardship and an additional season of eligibility even though

he redshirted as a freshman in 2006. Fisher, who also suffered a leg injury, redshirted in 2008. He was in serious contention to earn a starting job. Blue, who played primarily on special teams last season, suffered a knee injury. He also missed the 2008 season because of a knee injury, after playing as a true freshman.



## ANOTHER LOSS

Senior tight end **DREU YOUNG** has been lost for at least part of the season and maybe more. Young was slated for surgery after a "flare-up in his back," coach **BO PELINI** said. "I don't know exactly what the timetable is. He won't be available for a while, and his status of coming back is a little bit up in the air. It's kind of too early to tell. It's more of a medical question."

"You won't see him out there 'til probably, at least, mid-season, if at all."



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ARON BABCOCK

## INSIDE OR OUT

Cameron Meredith is a defensive end, no question about that. But the 6-foot-4, 265-pound sophomore could play defensive tackle “in a heartbeat,” defensive coordinator Carl Pelini said in the spring. “He’s strong; he’s strong lower body. He could play inside tomorrow.

“We don’t coach it any differently. Our guys (defensive lineman) are completely interchangeable. We coach our defensive ends just like we coach our tackles. They do the same drills every day, same reads, everything. So if I’m head-up on the tight end or head-up on a guard, it doesn’t matter. On an outside shade on a guard or outside shade on a tackle, it’s the same steps, everything.”

## WHAT A RUSH

Despite being slowed by injuries, Roy Helu, Jr. rushed for 1,147 yards and 10 touchdowns last season. The senior I-back has 2,159 career-rushing yards and needs 540 more to climb into the Cornhuskers’

all-time top 10. With another 1,000-yard season, he would move into the top four.

Helu was asked how he’s a different player now than a year ago. “I can’t say. Only time will tell,” he said. “I know I want to be (a) better all-around back, mentally, physically. But I don’t know what that would look like until the end of the season.”

He was healthy going into fall camp, the shoulder injury that hampered him clearing up completely “somewhere between the middle of the summer and spring ball,” Helu said.

## CAREER RUSHING

Mike Rozier (1981-83).....	4,780
Ahman Green (1995-97).....	3,880
Eric Crouch (1998-01).....	3,434
Calvin Jones (1991-93).....	3,153
Ken Clark (1987-89).....	3,037
I.M. Hipp (1977-79).....	2,913
Lawrence Phillips (1993-95).....	2,777
Dahrran Diedrick (1999-02).....	2,745
Cory Ross (2002-05).....	2,743
Derek Brown (1990-92).....	2,699

## SIDELINES

### SEEMS LIKE OLD TIMES

Among the signs that Bo Pelini has the program back on-track is the number of Huskers on pre-season national watch lists. Junior defensive tackle Jared Crick is included on four of the lists.

#### Chuck Bednarik Award (60 nominees):

Prince Amukamara, Sr., CB;  
Jared Crick, Jr., DT

#### Biletnikoff Award (51):

Niles Paul, Sr., WR

#### Walter Camp Award (30):

Jared Crick, Jr., DT

#### Ted Hendricks Award (36):

Pierre Allen, Sr., DE

#### Lou Groza Award (30):

Alex Henery, Sr., PK/P

#### Maxwell Award (60):

Roy Helu, Jr., Sr., IB

#### Bronko Nagurski Trophy (74):

Prince Amukamara, Sr., CB;  
Jared Crick, Jr., DT

#### Outland Trophy (63):

Jared Crick, Jr., DT

#### Jim Thorpe Award (35):

Prince Amukamara, Sr., CB;

#### Paul Hornung Award (48):

Niles Paul, Sr., WR





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LAW FIRM OR STARTING  
A DAILY HUSKER BLOG.  
THANKFULLY THEY  
CHOSE THE LATTER.

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## ///PROPER RESPECT\\

Sophomore I-back Rex Burkhead respects fullbacks.

"They're definitely important," he said.

"My dad was a fullback, so he kind of gives me the ins and outs with them. They're the guys that lead-block for you.

They're the tough guys in the backfield.

They can be in the passing game, whatever it is you need them (to do)."

Rex's dad, Rick, played collegiately at Eastern Kentucky.



## TOUGH & PHYSICAL

**TYLER LEGATE** fits into the tradition of Nebraska fullbacks. "I'll tell you, Legate's a tough sucker, man," running backs coach Tim Beck said during fall camp. "He just does everything right. He's a fierce competitor and tough kid, so he's a typical Nebraska fullback. I can tell you that."

Legate also appreciates the tradition of which he's a part. The junior walk-on from Neligh, Neb., can name the Cornhusker fullbacks from the time he first started

watching, when he was 6-years-old and his cousin **BILLY LEGATE** was playing the position. "The Makovickas (Jeff and Joel), you've got (**CORY**) **SCHLESINGER** (pictured); he's a big dude. Who else is there? I always remember **DANE TODD** is a good one, (**JUDD**) **DAVIES**, (**STEVE**) **KRIEWALD**, from a small town. Who else? My cousin Billy, obviously.

"And the thing is, it's always been like a Nebraska tie, it seems like."



## IT'S UNANIMOUS

No surprise here. Nebraska was a unanimous pick by conference-area media to repeat as the Big 12 North Division champion, while Oklahoma was picked to win the South Division.

Husker defensive tackle Jared Crick and Texas A&M linebacker Von Miller were picked as the pre-season Big 12 Co-Defensive Players of the Year. Texas A&M quarterback Jerrod Johnson was picked as the Big 12 Offensive Player of the Year. In addition to Crick, cornerback Prince Amukamara, tight end (adjuster) Mike McNeill and place-kicker Alex Henery were first-team All-Big 12 selections.

Crick was among three unanimous first-team selections. The others were Oklahoma defensive lineman Jeremy Beal and Sooners linebacker Travis Lewis.

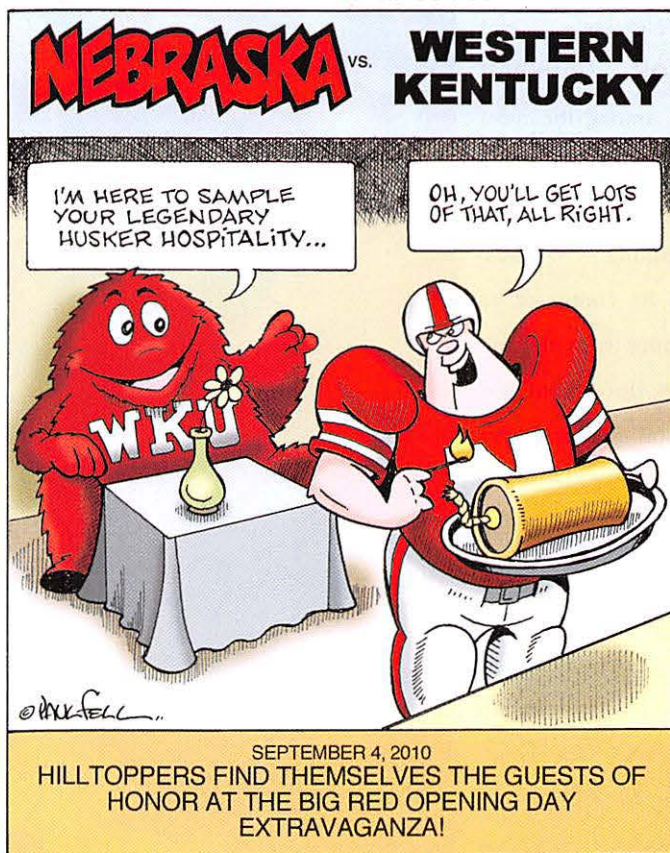
### NORTH

1. Nebraska
2. Missouri
3. Kansas State
4. Kansas
5. Colorado
6. Iowa State

### SOUTH

1. Oklahoma
2. Texas
3. Texas A&M
4. Texas Tech
5. Oklahoma State
6. Baylor

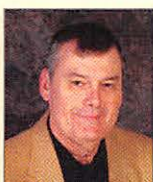
## THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION



## QUICK PICKS



**Aaron Babcock**  
(0-0, 0-0)



**Mike Babcock**  
(0-0, 0-0)



**Terry Douglass**  
(0-0, 0-0)



**Kevin Kugler**  
(0-0, 0-0)



**Sean Callahan**  
(0-0, 0-0)



**Matt Davison**  
(0-0, 0-0)

(Season, Last Week)	Aaron Babcock (0-0, 0-0)	Mike Babcock (0-0, 0-0)	Terry Douglass (0-0, 0-0)	Kevin Kugler (0-0, 0-0)	Sean Callahan (0-0, 0-0)	Matt Davison (0-0, 0-0)
Western Kentucky at Nebraska	NU 44-3	NU 42-6	NU 51-6	NU 42-10	NU 52-7	NU 47-3
Colorado vs. Colorado State	CU 24-20	CU 28-24	CU 33-21	CU 28-17	CU 37-31	CU 27-21
UCLA at Kansas State	UCLA 21-14	KSU 20-10	KSU 24-21	KSU 21-17	KSU 34-30	KSU 21-17
Illinois vs. Missouri	MU 28-24	MU 34-21	MU 38-24	MU 49-21	MU 45-31	MU 31-24
Southern Miss at South Carolina	USM 21-20	USC 24-21	USC 28-14	USC 21-13	USC 23-16	USC 16-14
LSU vs. North Carolina	LSU 17-14	UNC 21-17	LSU 20-14	LSU 17-14	UNC 31-27	UNC 13-10
Boise State vs. Virginia Tech	BSU 17-13	BSU 17-13	VT 17-13	VT 24-21	VT 37-28	BSU 27-23
Oregon State vs. TCU	TCU 28-14	TCU 35-31	TCU 27-14	TCU 31-17	TCU 30-23	TCU 23-10



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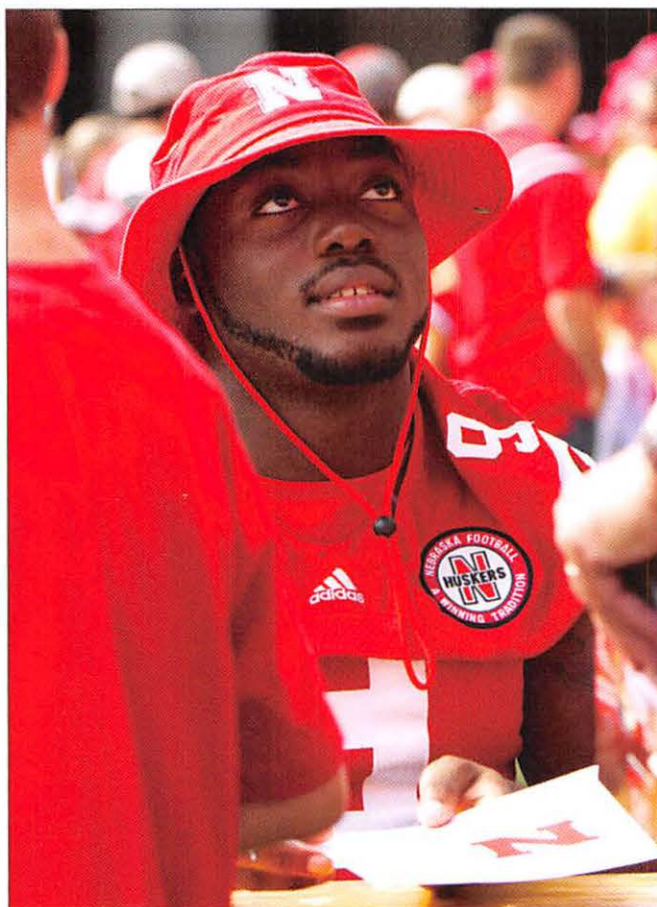
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## STEPPING UP

Defensive end **JASON ANKRAH** was among the most prominent members of Nebraska's 2009 recruiting class, and he continued to practice with the top units throughout last season, even after it was apparent he would be redshirted. He had the talent to play right away. But defensive end is "the last position on the field you would want to play a true freshman," defensive coordinator **CARL PELINI** said.

"It's so reactionary. Defensive line, to me, is such a matter of conditioning and reaction that it takes time. It takes time to condition your body to react in a split-second, the way you want it to."



Ankrah probably could have played right away in a different system. "If we were a team that just ran through gaps and got up-field, then go ahead. But that's not what we do," said Pelini.

"We play heavy on guys and we read and we react."

## SIDELINES

### HIGH PRAISE

On letter-of-intent-signing day Nebraska announced the names of 16 walk-ons, among them Keegan Hughes, a 6-foot-1, 175-pound wide receiver from Roswell, Ga.

"He's a two-time Fulton County all-conference player," Jeff Jamrog, Nebraska's assistant athletic director for football, said, "kind of reminds you of Nate Swift (when) you see highlight film."

Hughes grew up a Husker fan, according to Jamrog, because his mom grew up in Pierce, Neb., and his father lived for a time in Omaha. "It'll be interesting to see which ones (walk-ons) pan out, rise to the top, but it would not surprise me if he helps us because we saw him in camp," said Jamrog.

Fourteen of the 16 attended the Cornhuskers' camp.

The 2010 football media guide lists 22 walk-ons, including transfers offensive lineman Scott Criss (Wyoming) and wide receiver Stanley Jean-Baptiste (Fort Scott Community College).



# LARRY THE CABLE GUY

## REPORT UNDERAGE DRINKING

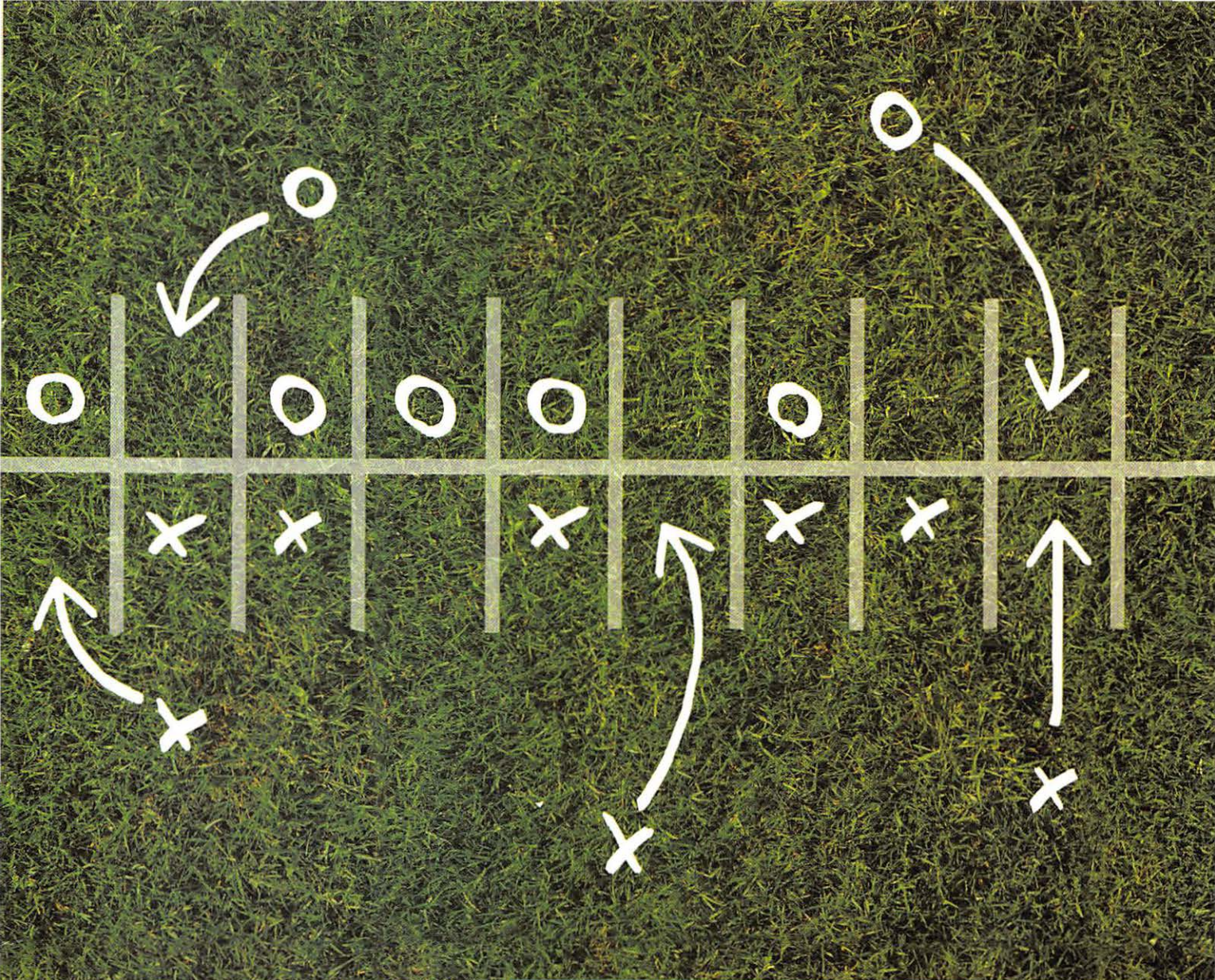


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**N**

## Seward



Consider that an average lineman at Nebraska in 1936 weighed 193 pounds. Then consider that Lloyd Cardwell stood 6-foot-3 and weighed 200 pounds.

He was not a lineman. He was a back.

Cardwell played safety on defense, and he was a load to tackle as a ball carrier.

He was swift as well as big, and Frederick Ware, sports editor of the Omaha World-Herald, nicknamed him "the Wild Hoss of the Plains." That's "hoss" as in horse.

He almost certainly would have earned All-America recognition, had he not played in the same backfield as Sam Francis – who finished second to Yale's Larry Kelley in voting for the Heisman Trophy in 1936. Cardwell and Francis helped the College All-Stars defeat the NFL champion Green Bay Packers 6-0 in 1937.

Cardwell, who was born in Republic City, Kan., but attended high school in Seward, was a first-round draft pick of the Detroit Lions, signing for a \$250 bonus. He played in the NFL from 1937 to 1943 then coached football at Omaha University (now Nebraska-Omaha) for 32 years.

### SEWARD, NE

**County:** Seward (county seat)

**Population:** 6,841 (2008)

**Distance from Lincoln:** 23 miles

#### DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Dale Klein holds the Cornhusker and NCAA record for field goals in a game with seven, in seven attempts, against Missouri in 1985. Sam Koch holds the school record for punting average in a season, 46.51 on 71 punts in 2005. He's second in career average, 44.04.
- ▶ John Weller was the Cornhuskers' captain in 1907.
- ▶ Seward bills itself as "America's Small Town 4th of July City." Its annual celebration has attracted crowds of nearly 40,000 and includes an apple pie eating contest. The community's high school youth provide leadership for the event, which has received national recognition.

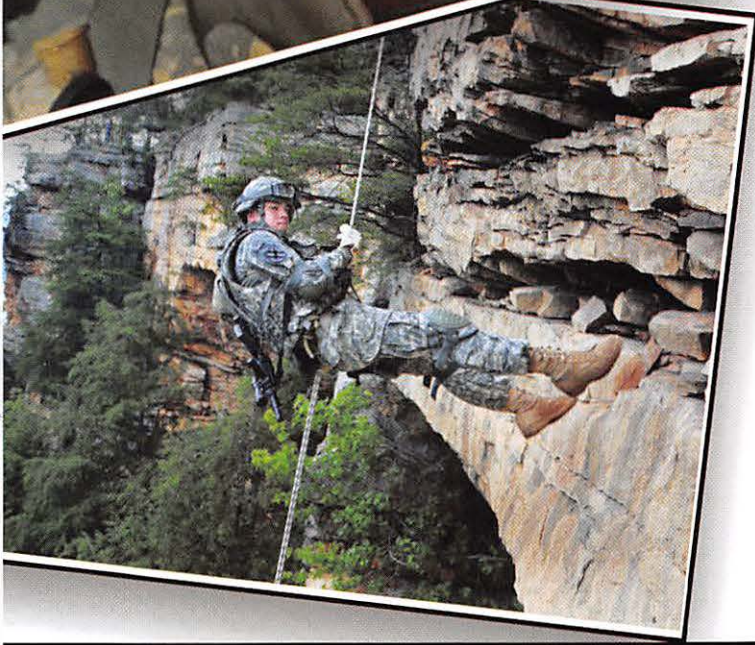
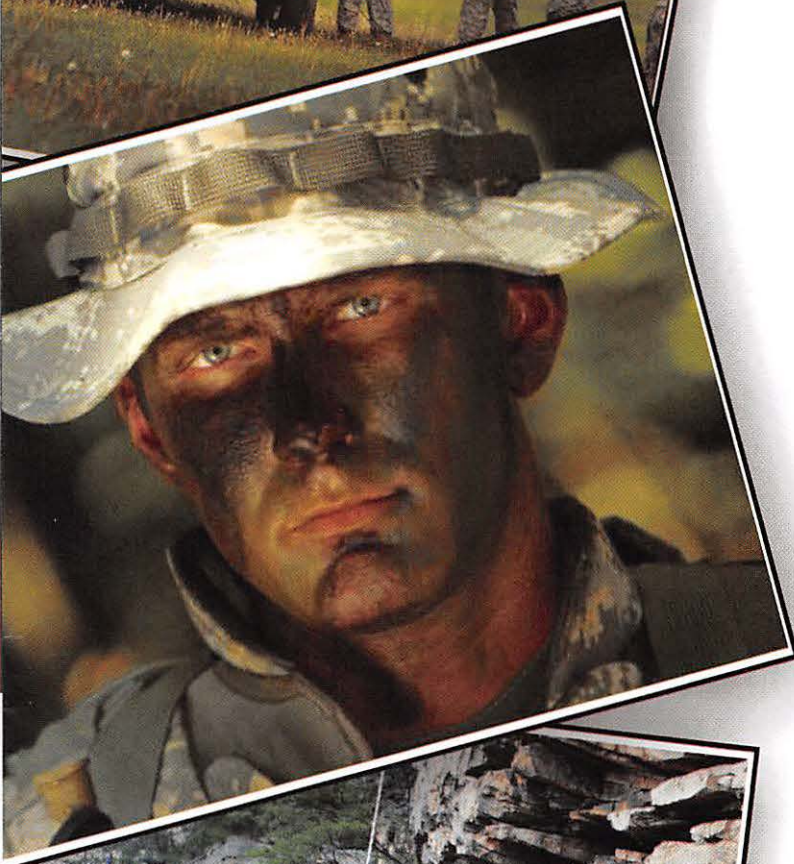
#### NU FOOTBALL LETTERMEN

- \*\*\*Lloyd Cardwell, HB (1934-35-36)
- Chad Eicher, FB (1996)
- Dave Fiala, FB (1992-93)
- Andy Kadavy, LB (2005-06)
- \*Dale Klein, PK (1984-85-86)
- Sam Koch, P (2003-04-05)
- Nate Kolterman, OT (2000-01-02)
- Kory Mikos, T (1994-95-96)
- Herbert Potter, QB (1911-12-14)
- John Sedlacek, T (1945-46-47-48)
- David Seizys, WB (1991-92-93)
- \*John Weller, HB (1905-06-07)
- \*Raymond F. "Bub" Weller, T (1920-21-22)

[\*First-team all-conference]

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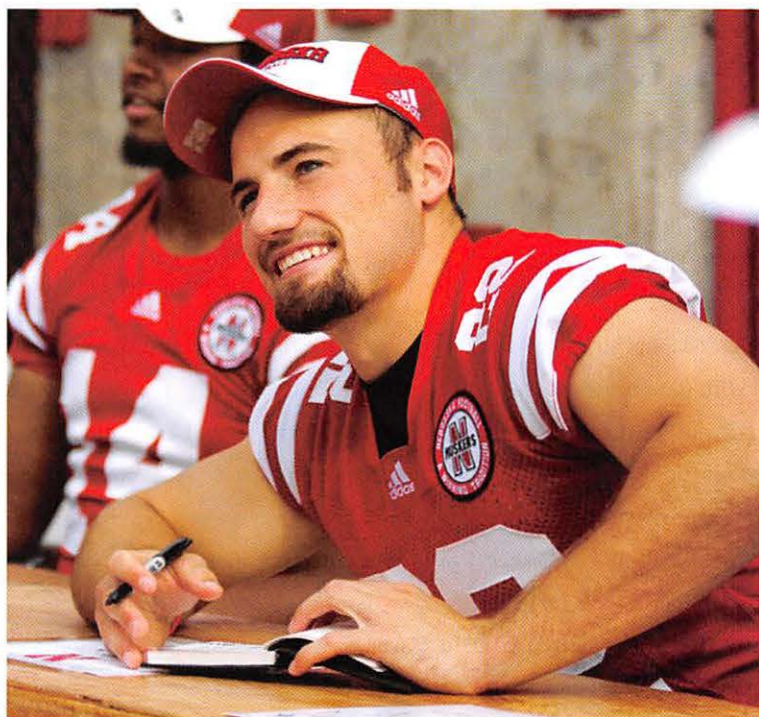


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## FIVE QUESTIONS

# Rex Burkhead

*The I-Back Takes His Turn on the Hotseat*

### REX BURKHEAD

was among 20-25 Nebraska football players who played in a wheelchair football game in the spring with patients at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln.

"It was tough," Burkhead said. "I mean, there were some kids who were flying. I was just struggling to stay straight and work around. But they were stopping and stuff like they were actually on a football field."

The patients were mostly in middle

school and high school. The Husker players watched a video of how to play wheelchair football, but otherwise had little preparation.

"We did some, I guess you could call them, cone drills. We were rolling and going around and stuff," Burkhead said. "I wasn't so good on the agility stuff, stopping and turning. Niles (Paul) was actually really good at it. It was really surprising us."

Cody Green played quarterback, and

Burkhead helped coach and draw up plays.

"It got pretty competitive out there," Burkhead said. "A lot of trash-talking, but we ended up winning by a point."

Burkhead said he'll do it again.

"Any time you have an opportunity to go out into the community and help out, you've got to take it. You feel like you are helping those kids out and helping them get a positive outlook on life."

# 1

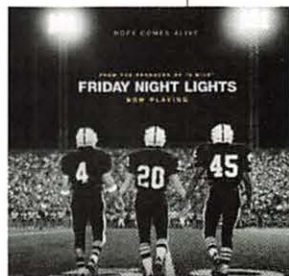
**HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED** Could you really dunk a basketball in the eighth grade?

**REX BURKHEAD** Yep, it was the summer after my eighth grade-year. I was probably around 5-7. I was a big basketball fan growing up. Vince Carter was my guy. I saw him in a dunk contest, so I just wanted to dunk a ball.

# 2

**HI** Who's your favorite character in the movie Friday Night Lights?

**BURKHEAD** The quarterback, (Mike) Winchell. Actually, the defensive coordinator at my high school, Clint Stewart, was his back-up in real life.



# 3

**HI** What's the best prank you've seen a teammate play?

**BURKHEAD** Austin Jones, not really a prank, but he's got a lot of good coach impersonations. He does Carl (Pelini) pretty well.

# 4

**HI** How did your nickname "Superman" emerge?

**BURKHEAD** I guess the newspaper people back in high school started it up, and it kind of spread.



# 5

**HI** What's been the reaction back home from your friends and family about Nebraska leaving the Big 12 for the Big Ten.

**BURKHEAD** They're kind of disappointed, because I would've had some games close to home, and they wanted to be able to go to those games. But at the same time, they think it will be a fun and neat experience for me.





## STATE OF THE HUSKERS

BY CURT MCKEEVER

# Pelini's reactions reflect a deeper issue

**A SPORTS WRITER** friend once passed along a piece of wisdom he'd been given that he said played a big part in him reaching a happy retirement. Essentially, the advice boiled down to this: If he really felt unappreciated or like he was getting the shaft on interesting story assignments, he was always free to start his own paper. Otherwise, no use complaining about it.

Which leads me to Bo Pelini's three-day, mid-August lockdown on the media outlets that cover his football team — as well as friends of the program and former players who ordinarily receive access to watch entire practices.

Pelini put a halt to all interviews of players and coaches and closed practices to everyone except team members after being angered by the manner in which a season-ending injury suffered by linebacker Sean Fisher became public information.

Within an hour of the end of the practice in which Fisher had been hurt, news was posted on at least one popular Husker Internet message board, details given by a fan who had attended the practice as a guest. Traditional media outlets — usually allowed to watch the first 15 minutes or so of practice under the caveat that they not use that time

to compile and publish injury lists — followed with their reports.

Especially upsetting to Pelini was one organization's calling Fisher's family to get the news.

These are the kinds of issues I'm pretty certain Pelini gave little, if any, thought to after he got his first head coaching gig three years ago. When he was Nebraska's defensive coordinator in 2003, he didn't have to deal with a lot of operational stuff that can become consuming for a head coach.

Obviously, the 42-year-old Pelini is still feeling this way in that regard. Who wouldn't be?

So this isn't to question whether he went overboard by battenning down the hatches to Big Red information. In fact, I don't believe that gets to the crux of this matter.

What I really think Pelini was revealing with the stance he took goes a lot deeper than showing folks who's in charge. Besides, by now everyone knows who that is, and they ought to know he's going to be fiercely loyal to his players and staff.

Rather, I believe this clampdown was a tell-tale sign of the special type of team Pelini thinks he has and the responsibility he feels to live up to his own lofty expectations.

As the AP's pre-season No. 8 pick,

Nebraska, on the heels of a 10-4 season that included going toe-to-toe with Texas in the Big 12 championship and demolishing Arizona in the Holiday Bowl, is perceived to be in elite company it hasn't been hanging with for the better part of a decade. As you know, often times, perception and reality are one and the same.

And when you've got that kind of setup, who wouldn't do all they can to try and limit distractions (even though it would be ludicrous to think you could have complete control)?

Pelini isn't playing coy, either. He makes bold and confident statements about the talent he thinks exists on this squad. As for his comments being subject to review? Well, he's always got that love-hate deal going on with the media, right? But, really, this mid-August drama paled in comparison to last year's, when Pelini dismissed running back Quentin Castille from the program for violating team rules.

Sure, a couple friends told me that by the third day of Pelini's press shutdown they were jonesing for a fresh stash of Husker stories. Naturally, they celebrated over reading Pelini had told the Associated Press, "I don't want this place to be Fort Knox."

If he ever changes his mind, though, hey, it's his house. **N**





# Western Kentucky

First-year coach Willie Taggart looks to jump start struggling Hilltopper football program | JERRY TRICKIE

## FOLLOWING WKU'S

disastrous 0-12 campaign in 2009, first-year coach Willie Taggart will utilize a West Coast offense and

4-3 defense this fall. With nine starters returning on each side, several key parts will give the offense room to grow, but improvement

on defense (allowed 39.6 ppg last year) may be a bigger factor in determining the Hilltoppers' success in 2010.



Junior RB Bobby Rainey returns this fall after leading WKU in rushing yards (939) and total TDs (7) in 2009. The multi-talented Rainey also set single-season school records for all-purpose (2,101) and kickoff return yards (1,050) last year.



## HEAD COACH

**Resume:** Willie Taggart was named head coach at his alma mater following the 2009 season. He spent the previous three years as running backs coach at Stanford, including guiding Heisman Trophy runner-up Toby Gerhart. Taggart was also an assistant coach with the Hilltoppers (1999-2006) for eight seasons.

## KNOW YOUR FOE



**Thomas Majors, Senior, LB**

Majors led the Hilltoppers in tackles (101) in 2009, including a team-best 59 solo stops with three TFLs.



**Mark Santoro, Junior, S**

Santoro was second in tackles (91) last year and was the only Hilltopper with a forced fumble and a recovery.



**Jack Doyle, Sophomore, TE**

Doyle is WKU's leading returnee in catches (37) and yardage (365), after WKU lost two of its top three receivers.

## 2010 SCHEDULE

- 9/4 at Nebraska, 6 p.m.
- 9/11 at Kentucky, 6:30 p.m.
- 9/18 Indiana, 4 p.m.
- 9/25 at South Florida, TBA
- 10/9 at Florida Internat'l, 2:30 p.m.
- 10/16 Louisiana-Monroe, 6 p.m.
- 10/23 at Louisiana-Lafayette, 4 p.m.
- 10/30 North Texas, 2 p.m.
- 11/6 Florida Atlantic, 3:30 p.m.
- 11/13 at Arkansas State, 2 p.m.
- 11/20 Middle Tennessee, 3:30 p.m.
- 11/27 at Troy, TBA





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## 2010 Nebraska Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Location	Time
Sat, April 17	Spring Game	Memorial Stadium	1 p.m.
Sat, Sept. 4	Western Kentucky	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Sept. 11	Idaho	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Sept. 18	at Washington	Husky Stadium	TBA
Sat, Sept. 25	South Dakota State	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Thur, Oct. 7	at Kansas State	Snyder Stadium	TBA
Sat, Oct. 16	Texas	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Oct. 23	at Oklahoma State	Pickens Stadium	TBA
Sat, Oct. 30	Missouri	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Nov. 6	at Iowa State	Trice Stadium	TBA
Sat, Nov. 13	Kansas	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Nov. 20	at Texas A&M	Kyle Field	TBA
Fri, Nov. 26	Colorado	Memorial Stadium	TBA



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BIG TEN SCHOOLS: MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

## Minnesota Gophers

*Gopher football's rich history includes six national championships, 51 meetings with Nebraska* | TERRY DOUGLASS



**YOUNGER COLLEGE** football fans might not realize that the University of Minnesota has a long and rich tradition. The Golden Gophers, whose program started in 1882, have won six national championships with the most recent coming in 1960 under coach Murray Warmath. Prior to that, UM produced a three-peat with national titles in 1934, 1935 and 1936 before winning back-to-back crowns in 1940 and 1941 – all under coach Bernie Bierman.

Minnesota has also captured 18 conference titles with the last coming in 1967. The Gophers are 5-9 in 14 bowl appearances, but it should be noted that the Big Ten Conference didn't allow

its teams to participate in bowl games from 1918-1945 and only permitted its conference champion to accept a bowl bid from 1946-1974.

Although Nebraska hasn't played Minnesota since 1990, the two schools were frequent opponents from 1900-1974 with the Gophers owning a 29-20-2 lead in the all-time series. UM dominated the early series, but the Cornhuskers have won the last 14 meetings by an average score of 39-7. That included NU's memorable 84-13 road victory in 1983.

After finishing 8-2 in 1967, Minnesota didn't produce another eight-win season until 1999.

### DON'T MISS

The University of Minnesota is located in Minneapolis, which is a 430-mile drive from Lincoln. Non-stop flights to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport are available from both Lincoln and Omaha.

After playing home games in the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome from 1982-2008, the Gophers moved to TCF Bank Stadium for the 2009 season. The \$288 million horseshoe-style facility, which features a FieldTurf playing surface, is located on the UM campus and has a seating capacity of 50,805.

Perhaps the most famous attraction is the Mall of America, which is the country's largest retail and entertainment complex with 520 stores, 50 restaurants and the nation's biggest indoor theme park – Nickelodeon Universe.



### HEAD COACH

**Resume:** First-time head coach Tim Brewster is 14-24 in his first three seasons at

Minnesota. The 49-year-old Brewster played for Illinois (1981-83) and later served as a college assistant with North Carolina and Texas before jumping to the National Football League with San Diego and Denver.

### NAMES TO KNOW

**BRUCE SMITH:** Minnesota's lone Heisman winner (1941), Smith played halfback for the Gopher national championship squads in 1940 and 1941. Nicknamed "Boo," Smith's No. 54 was the first jersey to be retired by Minnesota in 1977.

**BRONKO NAGURSKI (bottom left):** Played fullback and defensive tackle for Minnesota from 1927-29, earning All-America honors. A member of both the college and pro football halls of fame, Nagurski went on to become a world champion professional wrestler.

**BOBBY BELL:** A college and pro football hall of famer, Bell played for Minnesota's 1960 national championship team and won the 1962 Outland Trophy at defensive end. He starred at linebacker for the NFL's Kansas City Chiefs.

**BERNIE BIERMAN (bottom right):** In a coaching career interrupted for three seasons by World War II, Bierman guided Minnesota to a 93-35-6 record. He won five national championships, three Southern Conference championships and seven Big Ten Conference titles.

**HENRY L. WILLIAMS:** The coach at Minnesota from 1900-1921, Williams compiled a record of 141-34-12. His teams captured eight Big Ten titles and his 136 victories are the most by a head coach in program history.





HUSKER FANS STREAM THROUGH MEMORIAL STADIUM DURING 2010 FAN DAY. PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK

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# Strong Grip

## HUSKERS HAVE A SOLID HOLD ON THE DEFENSIVE SIDE OF THE BALL

Check the statistics from last season.

Essentially any way you slice it, Nebraska played excellent defense.

And the Huskers actually think they can get better on that side of the ball in 2010?

They think they can allow fewer than 10.4 points per game?

They think they can improve defending the pass when they led the nation in pass-efficiency defense?

Improve on their 3.14 sacks per game, which tied for second nationally?

Improve on their rushing defense, which allowed only 93.1 yards to rank ninth?

On and on.

Nebraska defensive coordinator Carl Pelini doesn't back off on his opinion that, yes, the Husker defense is capable of bigger and better things.

"It's all come together for us system-wise," Pelini said. "When that happens, you have such a chemistry, and you don't really worry about losing any specific

parts of that system because it's just clicking. We've really philosophically got it down pat. We really feel we have it to a point where it's going to be hard for opponents."

Nebraska returns seven starters from last year's defense, led by defensive tackle Jared Crick (73 tackles in 2009, including 9.5 sacks) and cornerback Prince Amukamara, whose size (6-foot-1, 205 pounds) and overall athleticism have NFL scouts drooling.

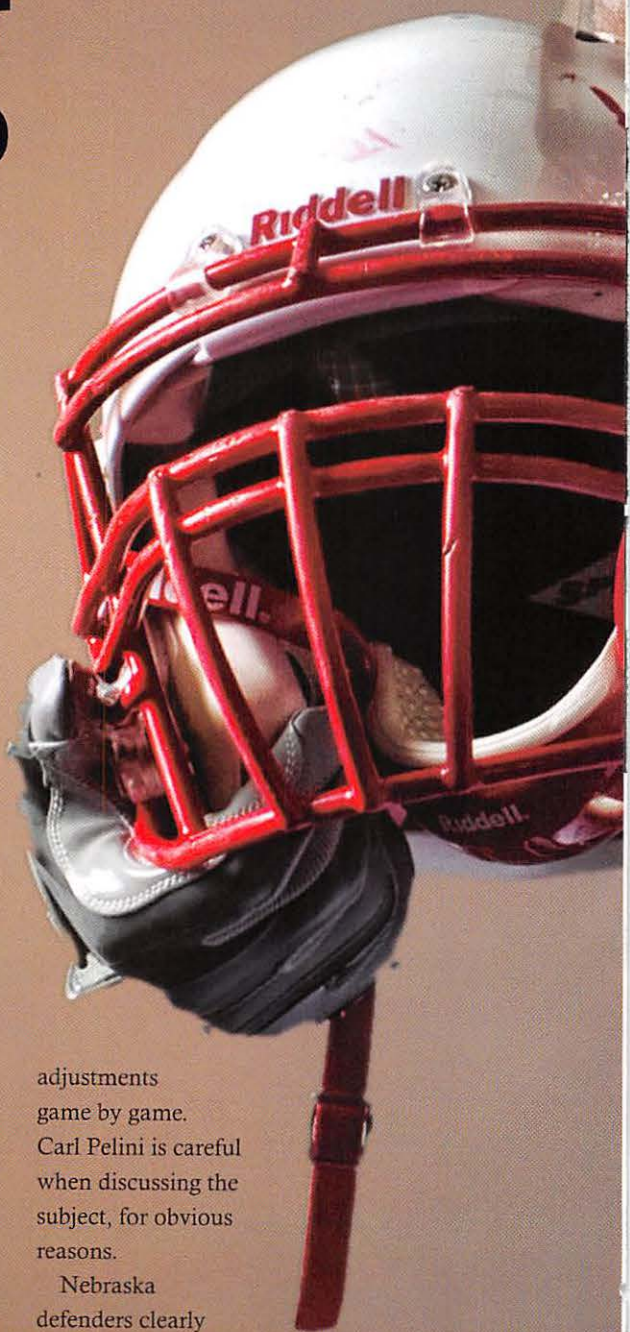
Bottom line, the Husker defense features abundant talent, depth and experience. Don't discount the importance of experience.

In their third year in head coach Bo Pelini's system, Nebraska veteran defenders have achieved a comfort level that plays a major role in fueling their confidence.

It helps matters that Pelini's defensive system is unique. It's difficult for opposing offenses to understand exactly what the Huskers are doing because NU makes subtle-but-significant

adjustments game by game. Carl Pelini is careful when discussing the subject, for obvious reasons.

Nebraska defenders clearly understand what's being asked of them. In the Holiday Bowl game this past December, it appeared Husker defensive backs knew Arizona's pass routes as well as the Wildcats' wideouts knew them. That's because



BY STEVE SPPL



**"It's interesting that we're to the point now where Prince Amukamara will be watching film on a Sunday and stop by my office and say, 'Hey, coach, every time No. 2 is on the ball, he never runs an underneath route.'"**

**Defensive Coordinator Carl Pelini**

Husker defenders are thinking conceptually. In addition, they've embraced the importance of understanding offenses' schemes and alignments, Carl Pelini says.

"It's interesting that we're to the point now where Prince Amukamara will be watching film on a Sunday and stop by my office and say, 'Hey, coach, every time No. 2 is on the ball, he never runs an underneath route,'" Carl Pelini says. "And I'll be like, 'Yes, Prince, exactly. Way to go, baby.' It's a matter of understanding the offenses enough to put yourself in the best coverage in each situation."

"The players are starting to look at video the way the coaches do. That's unique. So, when Bo says he thinks we can be better defensively, well, it's partly because now we get another year of that learning."

That said, Nebraska's

personnel losses from last season are significant, as the Huskers say goodbye to four of 2009's top five tacklers - defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh, linebacker Phillip Dillard and safeties Larry Asante and Matt O'Hanlon.

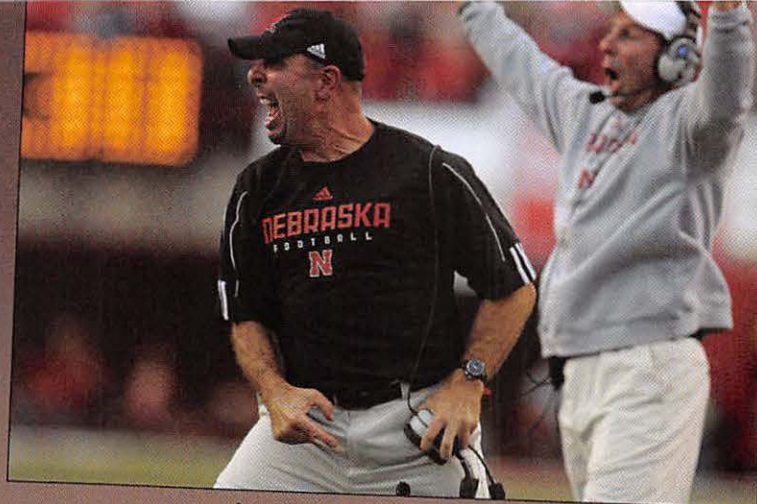
The Detroit Lions made Suh the No. 2 overall pick in the NFL Draft. One could build a strong argument that the Huskers have never had a better defender.

"You lose his 12 sacks and all those tackles for loss (24)," Carl Pelini says. "(Senior end) Pierre Allen's going to have to pick some up. And (sophomore end) Cameron Meredith's going to pick some up. Jared Crick's going to be better. And (sophomore tackle) Baker Steinkuhler's got to make up for some of that."

You never say, well, one guy's going to come in and replace a guy like Suh. Between all those guys, that productivity has to be replaced."

What's more, this is where the players' confidence in the system becomes integral.

"Once your program and system are moving smoothly, that becomes greater than one individual part, no matter how great that part is," Carl Pelini says.



## 5<sup>TO</sup> Watch



### LAVONTE DAVID, LB ▲

The junior-college transfer has "freakish talent for the size he is," according to fellow Husker linebacker Eric Martin.

### AUSTIN CASSIDY, DB

The junior is in the mix for playing time at safety as well as the "peso" hybrid position behind Eric Hagg.

### THADDEUS RANDLE, DT

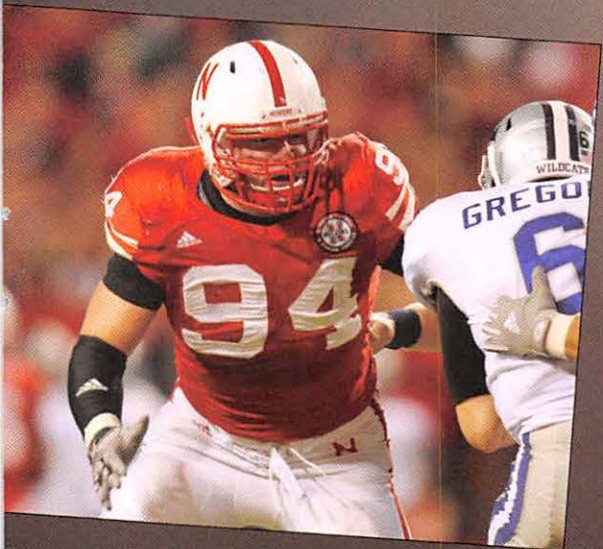
Redshirted freshman is exceptionally strong in his lower body, huge upside because he can get stronger in his upper body.

### CHASE ROME, DT


Will the true freshman play this season? He's "in the mix," Bo Pelini said early in pre-season camp.

### JOSH WILLIAMS, DE

Sophomore pushing for playing time behind Pierre Allen and Cameron Meredith.







# Out of the Fog

**THE STORM IS READY TO CLEAR FOR HUSKER FANS TO SEE WHO EMERGES AT QUARTERBACK**

The fog is about to clear and thank the heavens for that.

Admittedly, we've gotten pretty desperate in the search for any kernels of information regarding Nebraska's quarterback race.

We've reported the stop-the-presses news that Taylor Martinez is "hungry." Niles Paul told us that.

We've reported that Cody Green has "matured" as a quarterback and that Zac Lee throws the ball with "more zip" than he did even before a January surgery on his throwing arm.

We've reported that Husker coach Bo Pelini said the race is becoming more clear. That seemed pretty interesting until the follow-up question was asked: Can you elaborate on what you mean by more clear?

"No," Pelini said.

Oh.

Back beneath the fog we settled.

Truthfully, you haven't heard much of substance about this quarterback race other than the fact there is indeed a race, and three people have been involved in said race.

But now we come to the beautiful part. The Huskers are about to play games and you have tickets and televisions to watch these games. You are about to see the race unfold before your eyes.

Yes, friends, be certain this race is just beginning. Oh, sure, someone has to start the opener. That same person may even start the second game.

But it seems evident Pelini is waiting to see how these quarterbacks respond

when, as he likes to put it, "the bullets are flying."

Probably the most interesting quote of the off-season about the quarterbacks?

This one: "There's going to be somebody who's going to line up as that starter in the first game," Pelini said. "Is that necessarily the guy who's going to be the starter in game 3, 4 or 5? No, not necessarily."

Of course, if Pelini is content to wait until the Big 12 opener to settle on a starting quarterback, that means a Sept. 18 road trip to Washington is part of the analyzing process.

Danger in that? Sure. But then again, walking through the fire is sometimes the only way to find out whom you can trust.

**BY BRIAN CHRISTOPHERSON**



**Can you elaborate on what you mean by more clear?**

**"No," Pelini said.**

Remember last year when Lee owned the world in games against Florida Atlantic and Arkansas State?

Then came the trip to Virginia Tech (Lee was 11 of 30 for 136 yards that day) and the realization that Nebraska's quarterback situation was not on solid ground.

Like it or not, it takes a trip to a Blacksburg or Seattle to really know what you have.

Certainly the senior Lee does have the experience edge, having started 12- of-14 games last year. But anyone who thinks coaches spent the fall calling the race "even-steven" solely to fuel Lee's competitive drive are misguided. All behind-the-scenes conversations tell you this truly has been a fair fight for the top spot.

Bottom line: Pelini wants his quarterback to be a true running threat. Just look at the recruits/

signees (Brion Carnes, Jamal Turner,

Bubba Starling) this program has been lining up.

To be Pelini's man, Lee will have to bring a more physical presence to the position than he brought last year. To that charge, Lee seems full of determination.

"I think he knows that the other guys played well this spring," Husker wide receiver Mike McNeill said. "They're the ones that are being talked about. And I think he probably has a little chip on his shoulder, saying, 'I was the quarterback last year and now everyone is trying to dethrone me and give credit to the other guys.'"

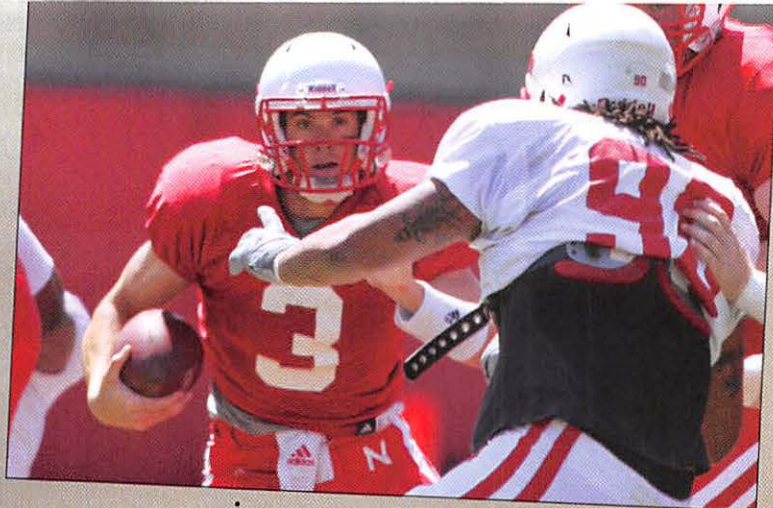
Adds Lee: "I grab whatever I can and use it as motivation."

Then there's Green who says: "It's my time to do it."

One football, three guys. Just

don't declare a winner to this race based on who starts the opener. That might not be the man who starts on Oct. 16 — you know, Texas.

Buckle up. Now we really see who's hungry.



## 7<sup>TO</sup> Watch

### ZAC LEE

Has the experience and seemingly the most accurate arm, but can the senior be a threat in the running game?

### CODY GREEN

The sophomore has the look, but needs to show he can make smart decisions in game settings.

### TAYLOR MARTINEZ

Brings fast feet and big-play running ability but needs to prove he can command a huddle.

### KODY SPANO

Hasn't been able to show what he can do because of multiple ACL injuries, which kept him off the 105-man fall-camp roster.

### LATRAVIS WASHINGTON

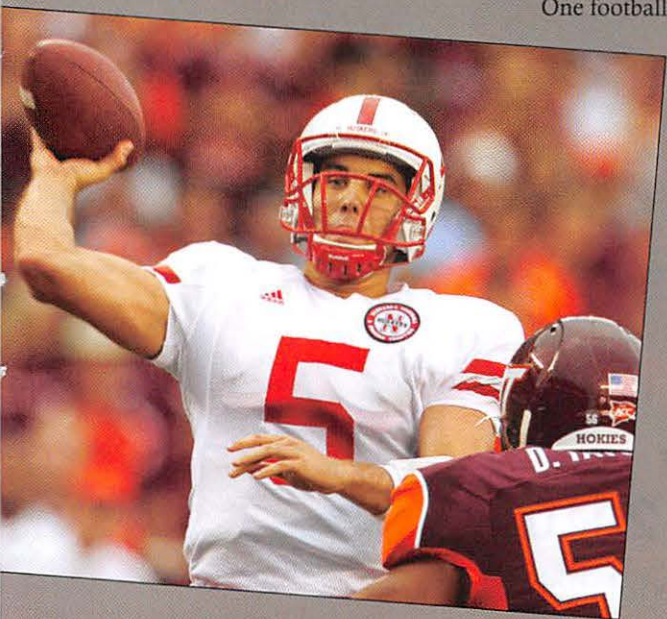
The senior brings a positive presence to NU's quarterback room but is likely to be used in only a reserve role this fall.

### RON KELLOGG

Don't underestimate the value of Kellogg, whose work as a scout-team QB has helped the defense prepare for opponents.

### BRION CARNES

Likely to redshirt since he's a true freshman but could be a name you hear about a lot next year.



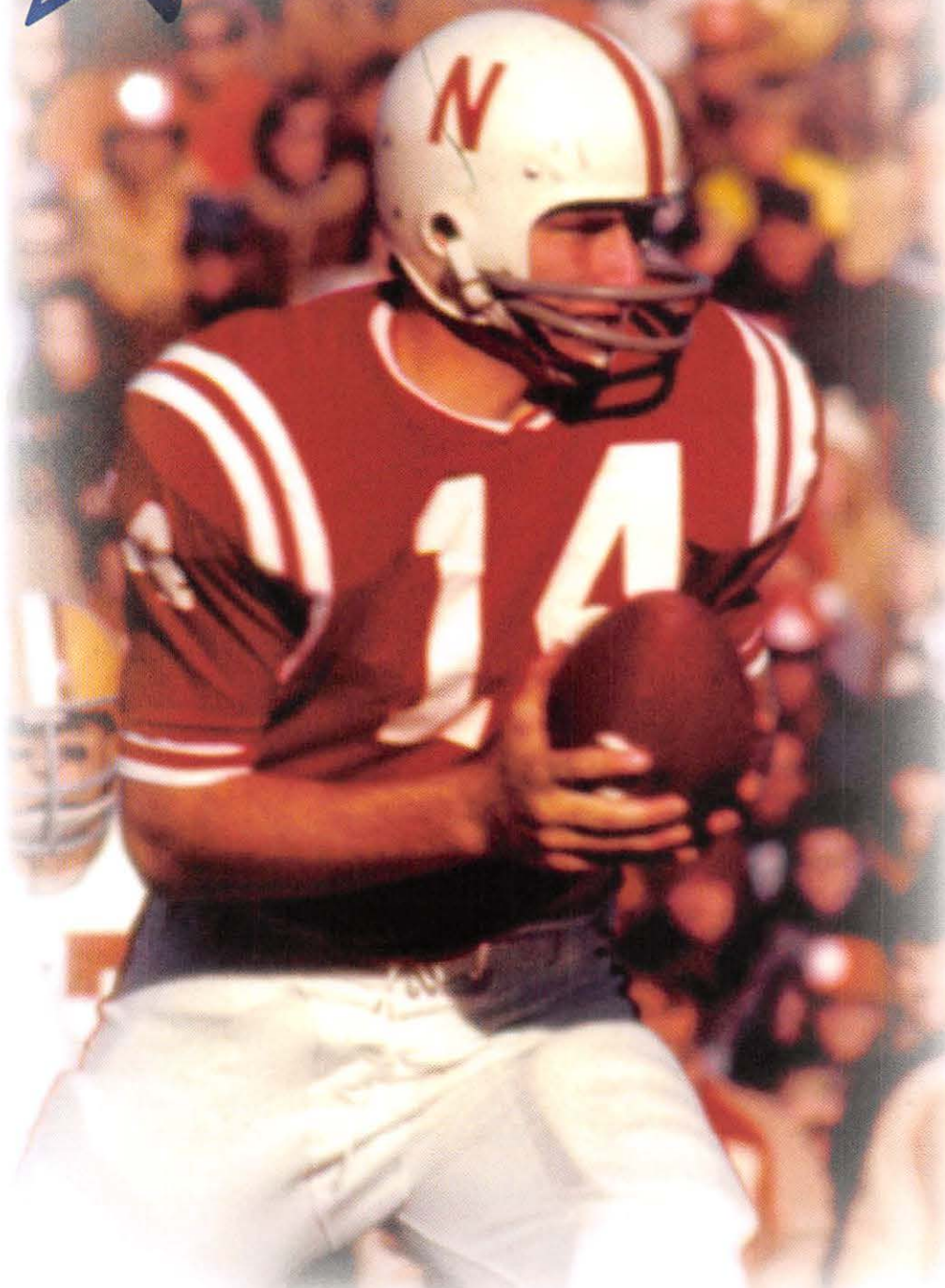




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**CATCHING UP WITH**

# Willie Harper

**A DESTRUCTIVE FORCE WHO FINALLY FOUND HIS PEACE**

**IT'S BEEN 40 YEARS** since Nebraska won its first national football championship, and that fabled team will be honored Oct. 16 when the Huskers play host to Texas.

Fans remember that 1970 team because it had great coaches, loads of talent, lots of luck and a sophomore defensive end who saved the season and the Orange Bowl. Eleven years later, that same Nebraska player from Toledo, Ohio, saved himself from the “drugs, the alcohol and the whole gamut” that scarred the first seven of his 11 seasons with the San Francisco 49ers.

Meet Willie Harper, who is now 60 years old, nearly 30 years drug free and in his 20th year as the pastor of the Jesus Christ for All Nations Church in Pleasanton, Calif.

Harper is a happy man, a loving husband and a proud father of nine children ranging in age from 42 to 18. He also adores 11 grandchildren and soon will welcome into this world his second and third great grandchildren.

When we tracked down Harper, he was celebrating a grandson's birthday in Atlanta, and you could hear his hearty laughter, sense his love for life and feel

his caring spirit through an old-fashioned land-line connection.

The conversation navigated through his bouts with addictions and his inability to stop his own destructive behavior even though he could stop almost anyone in the NFL. He remembers the night his life flashed before his eyes, his endless and unsuccessful pursuit of “a real God” and the dichotomy of feeling great physically but knowing he was dying spiritually.

Doctors told Harper he was killing himself, and truth be told, he didn't think he would ever survive the demons that passed through his family until one day in February 1981 – the day when he had “the ultimate experience” that he compares to Pentecost. “For me,” he said, “that was the day when I finally experienced the promise of the Holy Spirit, the power of the Father, the understanding of Revelations, and the healing of my soul. My journey was grueling, but it did lead to salvation.”

The experience removed Harper's self-imposed shackles, opened his heart and helped him remember starting in a Super Bowl as a pro and starting in the first of two national championship games to cap a 1970 season when he was named the Big Eight Sophomore Lineman of the Year, a First Team Sophomore All-American and the Orange Bowl's Outstanding Lineman.

In that 17-12 win over LSU, Harper remembers getting a late sack, knocking the quarterback out of the game and, on the next series, chasing down a running back, spinning him around, and then swiping the ball right out of his hands – all plays, no doubt, that influenced the outcome of the biggest game in Nebraska history at the time.

Harper still cherishes being able to

**MEET WILLIE HARPER, WHO IS NOW 60 YEARS OLD, NEARLY 30 YEARS DRUG FREE AND IN HIS 20TH YEAR AS THE PASTOR OF THE JESUS CHRIST FOR ALL NATIONS CHURCH IN PLEASANTON, CALIF.**

make those plays when he was so young. But he insists that no play, no game and no moment was ever bigger than that February day in 1981 – the day he unplugged the power from the enemy and knocked the devil out of his life.”

*by Randy York*



# IN THE Red Zone

# BIG TEN

## CONFERENCE



AARON BABCOCK

## TRADING PLACES

The 2010 Huskers Illustrated Yearbook included a two-page, speculative section on the Big Ten Conference. The headline was: Is This Nebraska's Future?

The answer, of course, was yes.

And it came in mid-June, soon after the yearbook appeared on newsstands. Big Ten Commissioner Jim Delany was in Lincoln for the announcement. He wore a block-N pin on his lapel and a red-and-white striped tie. And he clearly had done his homework on Cornhusker tradition.

"Fit is very important," he said, echoing Tom Osborne's sentiments.

"That's one thing I mentioned quite often was culture, today when I was talking, and I just think that it's a comfortable fit," Nebraska's athletic director said of the Big Ten. "It doesn't mean that we're going to agree 100 percent of the time, but I do think that there's a lot of similarity, an emphasis on work ethic, a lot of people are fairly blue-collar, pretty good values throughout the Midwest."

Nebraska's membership in the Big Ten doesn't begin until July of 2011, however, and the Huskers haven't left the Big 12 "psychologically," Osborne said during the Big Ten Media Days in Chicago, the week after the Big 12 Media



Days in Dallas. Nebraska's focus is still the Big 12. Coach Bo Pelini made that clear in Dallas, respectfully declining to answer questions about the Big Ten.

Even so, the Big Ten has continued to be a popular topic of discussion among Husker fans, particularly how the conference will be divided in football to determine participants in the championship game. The first will be played at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

Delany indicated that the parameters for divisions would be, in order of importance: competitive balance, the retention of rivalries and then geography. Teams will play eight conference games initially, with a planned increase to nine in the third or fourth year of Nebraska's membership.

The Huskers "could have 11 because everybody wants to play them," Delany said in Chicago.

Further Big Ten expansion remains a possibility, according to Delany. But for now "100 percent of our energies are focused on helping Nebraska transition into the conference," he said.

The Big Ten Network even plans to include the Huskers in its programming for 2010.

Leaving the Big 12 won't be easy, particularly given the tradition of schools originally aligned in the Big Six, and even before that in the Missouri Valley Conference. "There's a little bit of nostalgia because you realize some of the history's going by the wayside," Osborne said in June. "But for the long-term trajectory of the athletic program and the university, this is really an important day."

## 2009 BIG TEN STANDINGS

- 1 OHIO STATE (11-2, 7-1)
- 2 IOWA (11-2, 6-2)
- 3 PENN STATE (11-2, 6-2)
- 4 WISCONSIN (10-3, 5-3)
- 5 NORTHWESTERN (8-5, 5-3)
- 6 MICHIGAN STATE (6-7, 4-4)
- 7 PURDUE (5-7, 4-4)
- 8 MINNESOTA (6-7, 3-5)
- 9 ILLINOIS (3-9, 2-6)
- 10 MICHIGAN (5-7, 1-7)
- 11 INDIANA (4-8, 1-7)





# Searching for tackles

*Even with a wealth of talent, Husker coaches continue to pursue talent on defensive line* | SEAN STEVENS



**DESPITE WHAT** seems like a wealth of young defensive tackles in the program, most coaches believe that you can never have too many players at that position. With **Kevin Williams** (6-2, 275) of Holland, Ohio, already committed, Nebraska is still searching for at least one and possibly two players to join him in the 2011 class. Who are the prospects most likely to join Williams?

Although he's yet to set a date, **Christian Heyward** (6-2, 269) of San Diego, Calif., has said that he will officially visit Lincoln this fall. UCLA will be tough to beat, however, as his

family has a history with the school. Heyward attends the same high school Husker senior safety **Anthony West** attended, which should solidify the visit.

**Mickey Johnson** (6-1, 310) of Covington, La., has NU in his top five with LSU, Michigan, Tennessee and UCLA. He has a visit set to UCLA for Dec. 3. LSU will be tough to beat, however.

Tempe, Ariz., prospect **Todd Peat, Jr.** (6-3, 300) will visit Nebraska (Oct. 16) along with Miami and Alabama, but Stanford and hometown Arizona State have the lead. NU tight ends coach **Ron Brown** has built a strong relationship with Peat.

## OFFENSIVE LINE, REPLACING ADMIRE

With **Dylan Admire** of Overland Park, Kan., de-committing from NU and pledging to Kansas, NU may add one player to the four 4-star prospects currently committed. The most likely options are 4-star **Cyrus Hobbi** (6-4, 285) of Scottsdale, Ariz., and Rice commitment **Givens Mordi Price** (6-4, 278) of Houston, Texas. Both say they'll visit Lincoln officially this fall.

## DEFENSIVE END, TOO

Defensive end is another position that needs some replenishment. There are many possible commitments out there, including **James Adeyanju** (6-2, 250) of Chicago, Ill., and **DeVante Wilson** (6-4, 230) of Corona, Calif., who will both visit for the Texas game Oct. 16.

Another possibility is **Jermauria Rasco** (6-3, 227) of Shreveport, La., who still holds the Huskers in high regard.

Stanford commitment **Anthony Sarao** (6-1, 215) of Absecon, N.J., is considering visiting with his parents as a follow-up to his camp trip this past summer.

## COMMIT Q&A



### DANIEL DAVIE

**At a glance:** Beatrice athlete Daniel Davie is one of three in-state prospects committed to Nebraska in the class of 2011. Davie moved to Beatrice from New Baltimore, Mich., which is a suburb of Detroit. Huskers Illustrated caught up with Davie in this week's NU commit spotlight.

**CALLAHAN:** What was the biggest change for you moving from Detroit to Beatrice?

**DAVIE:** Definitely getting used to the school and the smaller population. I came from a Class A type of school, so it was kind of hard seeing the same kids every day. At my old school I saw a person I never have seen before every day. I'd say that was the biggest and the hardest thing.

**CALLAHAN:** Your dad was a Division I basketball player at Drake and Western Illinois. Who wins the one-on-one game in the driveway today?

**DAVIE:** He's got me just because he's got five inches on me. I get past him every now and again. One-on-one though, when he gets competitive, he still takes me down in the post.

**CALLAHAN:** What's your favorite restaurant to eat at in Beatrice?

**DAVIE:** I would probably say Back Alley Eatery. It's a little family owned place that's pretty good.

**CALLAHAN:** Who's your favorite sports team to follow besides Nebraska?

**DAVIE:** I have always been a big fan of Michigan State football and basketball. I have always been a big fan of them. My favorite pro team now is the Minnesota Vikings. Percy Harvin is my favorite player.

**CALLAHAN:** If you could have dinner with any three famous people, who would they be and why?

**DAVIE:** I would say Michael Jordan because he's the best basketball player ever and then probably God for obvious reasons. Third I would say Percy Harvin because he's my favorite NFL player.

by Sean Callahan



## 2011 Commit List

- ★★ **AARYN BOUZOS**, DB, 5-11, 185  
La Mirada, Calif. (La Mirada)
- ★★★ **DANIEL DAVIE**, DB, 6-0, 181  
Beatrice, Neb.
- ★★★★ **RYAN KLACHKO**, OL, 6-4, 287  
Springfield, Ill. (Sacred Heart Griffin)
- ★★★★ **TEVIN MITCHEL**, DB, 6-0, 175  
Mansfield, Texas (Legacy)
- ★★★★ **TYLER MOORE**, OL, 6-6, 290  
Clearwater, Fla. (Countryside)
- ★★★★ **RYNE REEVES**, OL, 6-3, 300  
Crete, Neb. (Crete)
- ★★ **NIKLAS SADE**, K, 6-3, 190  
Raleigh, NC (Wakefield)
- ★★★ **DAVID SANTOS**, LB, 6-0, 193  
Klein, Texas (Klein Collins)
- NR **DAIMION STAFFORD**, DB, 6-1, 210  
Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. (Chaffey CC)
- ★★★★ **BUBBA STARLING**, QB, 6-4, 193  
Gardner, Kan. (Gardner Edgerton)
- ★★★★ **ZACH STERUP**, OL, 6-8, 260  
Hastings, Neb. (St. Cecilia)
- ★★★★ **JAMAL TURNER**, QB, 6-1, 173  
Arlington, Texas (Sam Houston)
- ★★★ **KEVIN WILLIAMS**, DT, 6-2, 275  
Holland, Ohio (Springfield)



## UNOFFICIAL OFFER LIST

- James Adeyanju**  
DE, 6-2, 250  
Chicago, Ill.
- Antoine Arnold**  
WR, 6-3, 180  
Temecula, Calif.
- Curt Evans**  
WR, 6-0, 173  
Hollywood, Fla.
- Christian French**  
Athlete, 6-6, 218  
Cedar Rapids, IA
- Givens Mordi Price**  
OL, 6-4, 278  
Houston, Texas
- Aaron Green**  
RB, 5-10, 191  
San Antonio, TX
- Jalen Grimbale**  
DE, 6-4, 255  
Las Vegas, Nev.
- Jesse Hayes**  
DE, 6-4, 230  
Cincinnati, Ohio
- Christian Heyward**  
DT, 6-2, 269  
San Diego, Calif.
- Cyrus Hobbi**  
OL, 6-4, 285  
Scottsdale, Ariz.
- Mickey Johnson**  
DT, 6-1, 310  
Covington, La.
- Wayne Lyons**  
Safety, 6-0, 190  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL.
- Malcolm Moulton**  
WR, 5-11, 185  
Fort Scott (Kan.) CC
- Patrick Onwuasor**  
WR, 6-2, 190  
Inglewood, Calif.
- Todd Peat, Jr.**  
DT, 6-3, 300  
Tempe, Ariz.
- Jermauria Rasco**  
DE, 6-3, 227  
Shreveport, La.
- Joel Willis**  
Athlete, 5-10, 180  
Garden Grove, CA
- DeVante Wilson**  
DE, 6-4, 230  
Corona, Calif.

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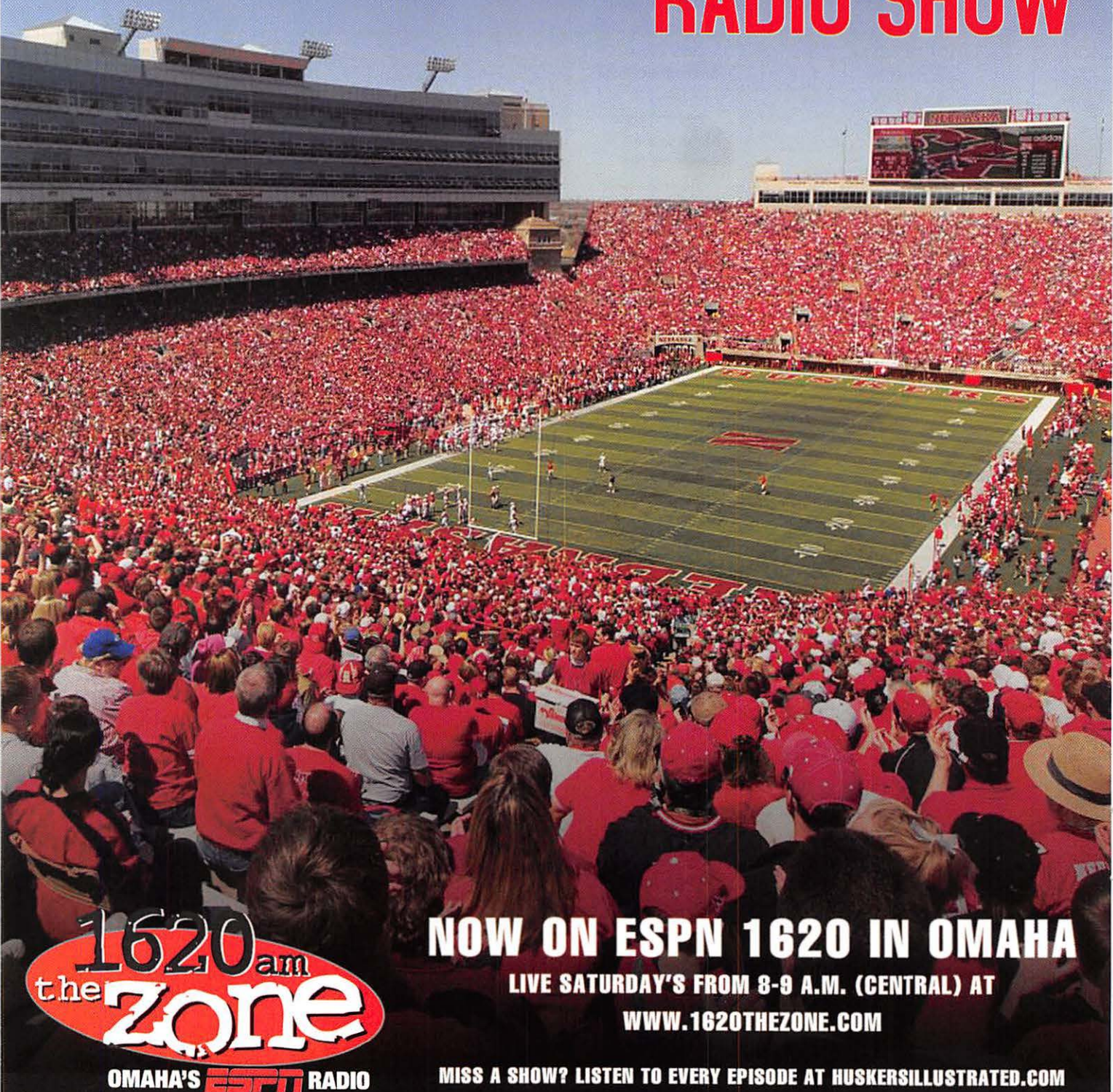
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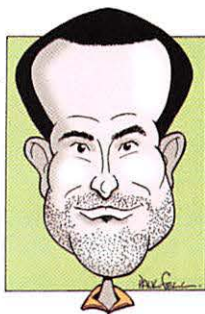
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## DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS

BY JOHN TALMAN  
RECRUITING PUBLISHER,  
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

# NCAA hurting recruits with legislation

**THERE IS PLENTY** of optimism heading into 2010.

So as I begin writing my pre-season column, I could reiterate how the Huskers are off to the fastest start in recruiting ever. But no, I need to make a complaint.

It's not about Nebraska and it's not about this staff's work on and off the field. Nebraska fans have to be very satisfied with the direction this program is going.

This is about the latest NCAA recruiting-rule changes.

The first of these changes has been passed. Starting with the class of 2012, prospects can no longer receive a written scholarship offer on Sept. 1 of their junior year. They'll have to wait 11 more months to receive one on Aug. 1 on or before their senior years.

A possible change is really interesting. A new NCAA governance committee, the Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet, is proposing to prohibit offering a junior student-athlete a scholarship even verbally until July 1 between his junior and senior years.

That means no matter how you slice it, you can't receive a scholarship offer in the mail or even be told you have one on the table.

First problem: How will this be enforced?

Is it a verbal offer if a college coach

calls a high school coach and says, "Well, we're not offering him, since that's against the rules, but in two years, let him know we plan to."

Just change the wording. There's your loophole.

Even Cabinet chair Petrina Long acknowledged how difficult this would be to enforce but claims this measure is necessary to ease pressure on prospects and coaches. This admission comes during a year when NCAA violations seem to be more common than daily mail delivery.

If you can't enforce it, what's the point?

What's most interesting about this new rule being based on "easing pressure" to the prospect and his family is: you're shortening his timetable to make a decision to a little over one high school semester.

If a prospect can't receive an offer until Aug. 1 before his senior season, that leaves roughly seven months not only to look at what options he now has but also take visits and come to a decision before February's Signing Day.

Plenty of prospects would like to have their college decision made early if the options are there, so that player can enjoy their final high school football season.

Of course, now that you've voted on written offers being prohibited before a prospect's senior year, you kind of have

to go the whole way – especially for us that cover recruiting on a daily basis.

It's hard enough to accurately report on a prospect's recruiting process.

Now we're talking about clouding the picture more after several instances of a prospect falsely reporting he had an official written offer from a particular institution. Nope, now we'll have prospects tell us they think they're getting an offer in 14 months – because their coach talked to a college coach that said they'd offer when the rules allowed them to.

Right, clear as crystal.

College coaches could deny they ever verbally offered the prospect if they fill up, which is different now when there is at least written proof.

While there is no clear majority of favoritism towards this proposal I'm ranting about, 73 percent of FBS head coaches backed the American Football Coaches Association proposal for an early signing day for recruits. However, Division I conference commissioners shot down the vote. The proposal would have allowed seniors to sign over three days in December, along with the current traditional first Wednesday in February.

Call me skeptical on changing rules that don't appear to do anything but make things worse for all parties involved in the process. Let's fix what actually needs fixing. **N**



# Re-Inventing a Good Thing

*Husker Volleyball enters the year with No. 2 rating and even higher expectations.* | BOB HAMAR



**SYDNEY ANDERSON**

## EVERY YEAR, JOHN COOK COMES UP WITH A THEME FOR HIS NEBRASKA VOLLEYBALL TEAM.

This year, it's all about a new look and a new way of doing things.

"By re-inventing, we're kind of looking at everything we've done and what's made us successful," Cook said. "We've had some pretty high standards here."

The standards are still high. The Huskers are once again shooting for a national championship, but this year they're going at it in a different manner.

This year, they will likely be going with a 6-2 offense with setters Sydney Anderson, a two-time

All-American, and Cook's daughter Lauren, who was the national freshman of the year last season at UCLA before transferring to Nebraska in January.

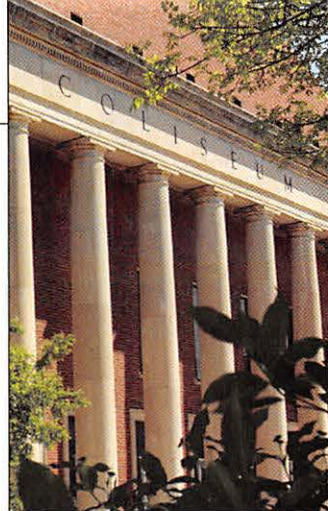
The Huskers also have a pair of 6-foot-5 left-handed right side players in senior Lindsey Licht and freshman Morgan Broekhuis.

"We have some unique players," John Cook said. "I'm not sure anybody in the country has ever had two 6-5 left-handers, and both Lindsey and Morgan are great attackers. Trying to build an offensive system around those two is where we're starting."

"Of course you have to have two setters to be able to do that. We feel like we have three great setters including Brigitte (Root), but two setters who have really proven themselves at the highest level of college volleyball."

There are problems with running a 6-2 offense. It requires a deep roster, two good setters capable of sharing the duties and four strong outside hitters.

But John Cook likes the offense. He considered using it last year with Anderson and Jessica Yanz at setter, but went with the 5-1 instead. Yanz left the program after last



## MOVE TO DEVANEY?

With the new Haymarket Park arena in the works, there is a chance that the Husker volleyball program could make the Devaney Sports Center its new home. The school recently sent out surveys to fans to gauge the interest in making such a move. John Cook is interested but said it has to look like a volleyball arena, not one made for basketball. He also doesn't want a big overhead scoreboard. "We want everybody looking down at the floor," Cook said. "When you're sitting in your seats, you see everything going on down there."

## MIDNIGHT START?

Brooke Delano came to Coach Cook before the season to ask about starting the first practice at 12:01. Cook was confused. "What do you mean 12:01?" he asked. "We have kids in class at 12:01." No, Delano said, she meant 12:01 as in a minute past midnight. Cook wasn't sure if that was legal, but he checked and it was. However, in the end the Huskers just practiced at their regular time. Cook said it was mostly an academic decision. "I really didn't want to start at 12:01 because I have a hard time staying awake past 10," Cook said. "We ended up deciding to go normal schedule because we have players who were taking finals and I didn't want them to sleep through class."



## 2010 Schedule

### RUNZA/AVCA SHOWCASE

SAT, AUG 28	KENTUCKY	QWEST CENTER OMAHA	4:30 P.M.
SUN, AUG 29	FLORIDA	QWEST CENTER OMAHA	4:30 P.M.
TUE, AUG 31	CREIGHTON	OMAHA, NEB.	7 P.M.

### BYU TOURNAMENT

FRI, SEP 03	BYU	PROVO, UTAH	8 P.M.
SAT, SEP 04	CAL POLY	PROVO, UTAH	1 P.M.
SAT, SEP 04	IDAHO STATE	PROVO, UTAH	6 P.M.

### AMERITAS PLAYERS CHALLENGE

THU, SEP 09	DAYTON	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
FRI, SEP 10	W. MICHIGAN	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
SAT, SEP 11	ILLINOIS	DEVANEY SPORTS CENTER	7 P.M.

### BIG 12 CONFERENCE PLAY

WED, SEP 15	IOWA STATE *	AMES, IOWA	7 P.M.
SAT, SEP 18	COLORADO *	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
WED, SEP 22	KANSAS *	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
SAT, SEP 25	BAYLOR *	WACO, TEXAS	7 P.M.
WED, SEP 29	OKLAHOMA *	NORMAN, OKLA.	7 P.M.
SAT, OCT 02	TEXAS *	NU COLISEUM	3:30 P.M.
WED, OCT 06	MISSOURI *	COLUMBIA, MO.	7 P.M.
SAT, OCT 09	TEXAS A&M *	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
SAT, OCT 16	KANSAS STATE *	MANHATTAN, KAN.	7 P.M.
WED, OCT 20	TEXAS TECH *	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
SAT, OCT 23	MISSOURI *	NU COLISEUM	TBA
WED, OCT 27	TEXAS *	AUSTIN, TEXAS	8 P.M.
SAT, OCT 30	IOWA STATE *	NU COLISEUM	TBA
WED, NOV 03	KANSAS *	LAWRENCE, KAN.	6:30 P.M.
SAT, NOV 06	TEXAS TECH *	LUBBOCK, TEXAS	6:30 P.M.
WED, NOV 10	KANSAS STATE *	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
SAT, NOV 13	COLORADO *	BOULDER, COLO.	TBA
WED, NOV 17	OKLAHOMA *	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
WED, NOV 24	BAYLOR *	NU COLISEUM	7 P.M.
SAT, NOV 27	TEXAS A&M *	COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS	TBA

### NCAA TOURNAMENT

FRI, DEC 03-04	NCAA FIRST AND SECOND ROUNDS		TBA
FRI, DEC 10-11	NCAA REGIONALS	TBA	TBA
THU, DEC 16	NCAA SEMIFINALS	KANSAS CITY, MO.	TBA
SAT, DEC 18	NATIONAL TITLE	KANSAS CITY, MO.	TBA

\* BIG 12 CONFERENCE GAME



season with intentions of retiring from the sport but has since joined the Dayton volleyball program.

One of the reasons Broekhuis enrolled in January was so she could work on her setting in case the Huskers needed her at that spot, but the addition of Lauren Cook allows Broekhuis to play on the right side.

John Cook also likes what the 6-2 offense does to the passing game. Last year the Huskers had to have a perfect pass in order to run their middles on slides to the outside. This year, the passes won't have to be so perfect.

It was the team's third trip to China. The Huskers won national

titles after their trip in 2000 and again in 2006.

Senior Tara Mueller said this year's trip brought the players closer together. She said it was also beneficial to have the entire 2010 roster travel together to China. "We have a lot of talent," Mueller said. "We're really lucky that

our whole team has been here as long as it has. Our freshmen have been here training with us so that kind of gives us an edge that we've already been working with everyone.

"I've never felt so close to a team. We really do have great chemistry. With that and our talent, hopefully we can do great things."

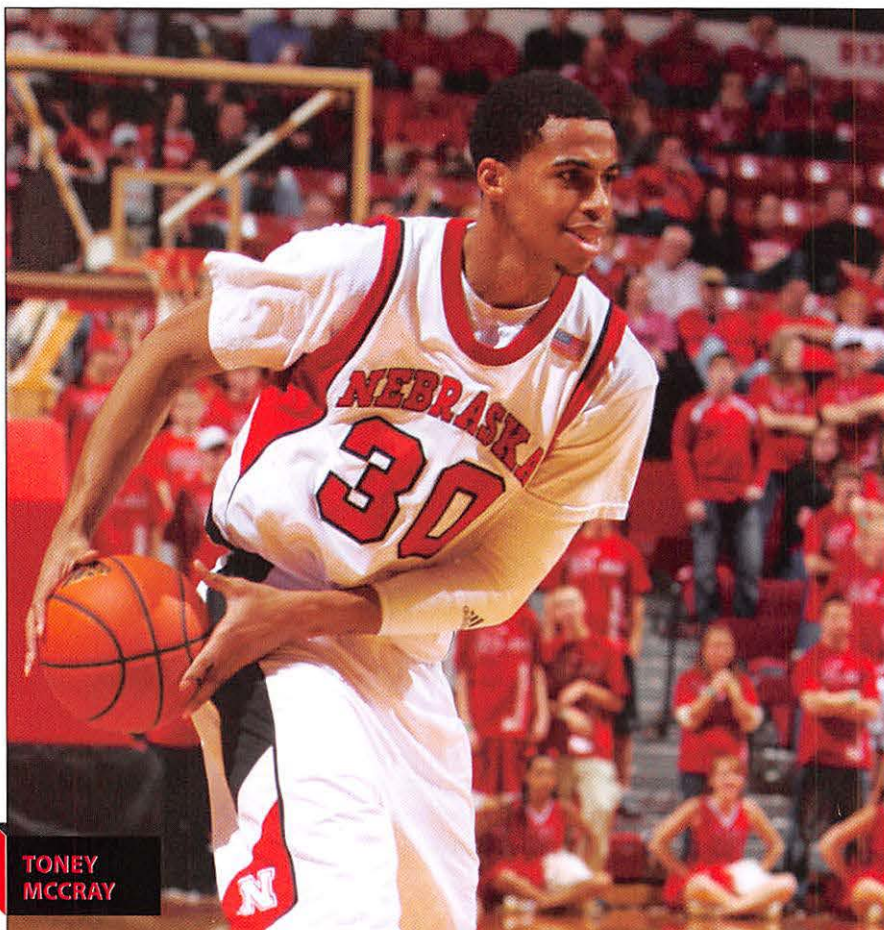
**3** Number of returning AVCA All-Americans



# Around THE Horn

I BRIAN ROSENTHAL

## THIS ISSUE MEN'S BASKETBALL BASEBALL WOMEN'S SOCCER



**TONEY MCCRAY**

### LEADING OFF

A summertime tour to the Bahamas wasn't just about basketball and suntans for members of the Nebraska basketball team.

Consider it a chemistry experiment, of sorts.

No lab coats or goggles. Just a lot of getting-to-know-you time that some players say will help relationships both on and

off the court.

"I'm hoping there will be a lot of bonding with the guys. I'm hoping each individual on the team can know the ins and outs of somebody else," said Brandon Richardson, a junior guard from Los Angeles, before the team departed Aug. 13.

"I know Toney (McCray) a lot, but I want to be able to know Toney

just as well as I know Trevor (Menke), or any of the new guys, like Caleb (Walker), to build team chemistry."

That, Richardson said, was a problem on last year's team, which finished 15-18 overall and 2-14 in the Big 12 Conference.

McCray, who missed most of last season with an elbow injury, agreed with Richardson.

### POINT GUARD COMMITS

Corey Hilliard is Nebraska's first oral commitment to the 2011-12 recruiting class.

The 6-foot-1 Hilliard is a point guard from Kansas City, Mo., and will be a senior at Raytown South High School. In addition to reported offers from Creighton, Missouri State, Wichita State, Tulane and Toledo, Hilliard said he also had an offer from Kansas State, and interest from Baylor.

Playing time, Hilliard said, was a major factor in his decision. Nebraska loses point guard Lance Jeter after this season, and incoming transfer Kamryon Brown will be a senior when Hilliard arrives on campus.





So did a handful of players, coach Doc Sadler said, who told him they felt chemistry needed a little improving.

"I think we just need to get more of a team atmosphere," said McCray, a junior from Missouri City, Texas. "I think everybody wants to get the chemistry together and just get to know each other a lot better.

"I feel like that was something we lacked last year."

Ten players on last year's active roster hadn't played a game in a Husker uniform prior to last season.

Nebraska played four games in the Bahamas. The Huskers open the regular season Nov. 12 against South Dakota.

## TWO NEW TO DOC'S STAFF

Tracy Webster and Wes Flanigan are the newest members of Doc Sadler's coaching staff.

Flanigan, a native of Little Rock, Ark., comes to Lincoln with 11 years of assistant coaching experience, including the last two years at Alabama-Birmingham. He played at Auburn from 1993 to 1997 and earned All-Southeastern Conference

Before that, Webster honed his recruiting skills as an assistant coach at Purdue (2003-04), Illinois (2004-07) and Kentucky (2007-09). Webster was an assistant coach on the 2004-05 Illinois team that reached the national championship game.

## EHLERS A HUSKER

Logan Ehlers' decision went down to the wire, but it's one that will please Nebraska baseball coach Mike Anderson.

Ehlers, selected in June by the Toronto Blue Jays in Major League Baseball's amateur draft, turned down an offer of \$800,000 to begin his collegiate career with the Huskers.

Ehlers, from Nebraska City, announced his decision shortly before the August 16, 11 p.m. deadline that teams could sign their draft picks. He'll be a freshman in 2010.

Ehlers is a 6-foot-1 right-hander who committed to



This summer, he led his American Legion team to the Class B championship game.

Two other pitchers drafted in June turned down professional offers and will honor their commitments to Nebraska – Jon Keller, an 11th-round pick of Seattle, and Brandon Pierce, a 26th-round pick of Pittsburgh. But right-handed pitcher Jon Musser, chosen in the 21st round by Philadelphia, decided to sign.

## WALKER HIRES TWO COACHES

Dan Bassett and Rebecca (Hornbacher) Sanow have joined the Nebraska soccer team as full-time assistant coaches under head coach John Walker.

Bassett, who began his job in July, was a volunteer coach in 2005, 2006 and 2008, when he also coached the Bellevue West High School boys and girls teams. He played at Bellevue University and is a native of Bulkington, England.

Sanow is a former Husker player who served six seasons as head coach at Iowa State, where she

was the winningest coach in school history with 45 wins. She resigned in 2006 because of family commitments.

Sanow began her coaching career at Baylor. She's expecting her second child and will join the program in January.

A sign of continuity on Walker's staff: In 17 seasons, he's had only five full-time assistants – Sanow and Bassett included – filling two available spots.

## MARLBOROUGH ON WATCH LIST

Nebraska sophomore Morgan Marlborough has been named to the watch list for the 2010 Hermann Trophy, given annually to the nation's best women's collegiate soccer player.

Marlborough, a native of Lee's Summit, Mo., led the Big 12 Conference in goals (21) and points (49) in 2009 and was named the conference's offensive player of the year and rookie of the year. A freshman All-American, Marlborough is also on the 2010 pre-season All-Big 12 team.

## \$800,000

Annual salary pitcher Logan Ehlers turned down to join the Husker baseball team.

honors as a junior.

Webster, a native of suburban Chicago, played for Wisconsin. He comes to Lincoln from DePaul, where he spent the second half of last season as interim head coach.

Nebraska his sophomore season of high school. As a senior at Nebraska City High School, he went 8-2 with a 0.27 ERA while striking out 186. He's a two-time Gatorade baseball player of the year in Nebraska.





## FROM THE ARCHIVES

**BLACKSHIRT BASH** – Bob Devaney's next-to-last team in 1971 still ranks among the best in college football history. It was strong in every aspect: offense, defense and kicking. Seven Blackshirts earned first-team All-Big Eight recognition: Willie Harper, Larry Jacobson, Rich Glover, Bob Terrio, Jim Anderson, Bill Kosch and Joe Blahak. They

ranked third nationally in scoring defense (8.2), second in rushing defense (85.9) and fifth in total defense (202.9). Those numbers would have been even lower if not for the Game of the Century against Oklahoma. The Sooners had the most potent offense in the country. Here the Blackshirts swarm to the ball during a 35-7 victory against Minnesota in the second game of the season.





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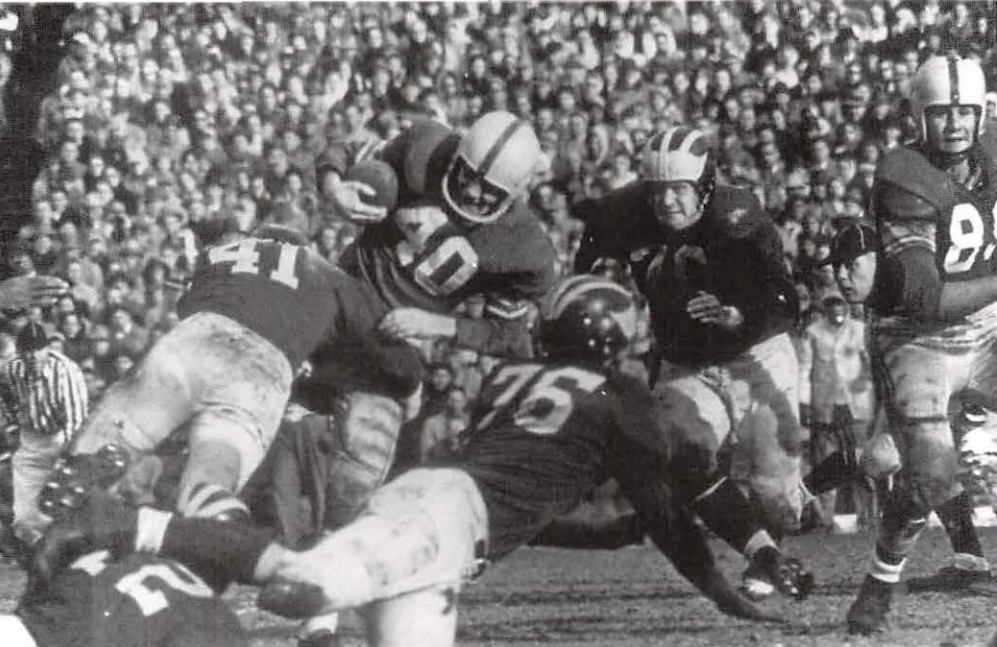
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## GAMES REMEMBERED

# Buckeye Blues

*Ohio State's Howard "Hopalong" Cassady rushed for 170 yards, three touchdowns against Huskers*

According to newspaper accounts, 300 students and fans were at the Lincoln Airport to greet the Huskers' return from Columbus, Ohio; that despite a cool, wet night and their 28-20 loss.

The crowd's enthusiasm reflected not only the fact that Ohio State was the defending national champion but also that the week before Nebraska had suffered the most embarrassing loss at Memorial Stadium in school history – 6-0 against prohibitive underdog Hawaii.

Clearly, the Huskers had been caught looking

ahead. And the Ohio State game had showed that what would be coach Bill Glassford's final team in Lincoln, still had some fight.

The difference in the game, offensively, was Ohio State's Howard "Hopalong" Cassady (pictured above), a senior running back who would win the Heisman Trophy in 1955. Cassady rushed for 170 yards and three touchdowns, the third after Nebraska had taken a 20-14 lead on a touchdown pass from Don Erway to Jon McWilliams, who had managed to get behind Cassady in coverage.

Cassady returned the

ensuing kickoff 36 yards and then carried for 26 yards as the Buckeyes quickly regained the lead for good. Nebraska contributed to its own demise, fumbling eight times.



### BILL GLASSFORD:

"There's no such thing as a moral victory. We got beat, but our boys fought like hell."

## OHIO STATE 28, NEBRASKA 20

Sept. 24, 1955 • at Columbus, Ohio

Nebraska	6	7	7	0	--	20
Ohio State	7	7	14	0	--	28

(OS) Howard Cassady 14 run (Fred Kriss kick)  
(N) Don Erway 9 run (kick blocked)  
(N) Johnny Edwards 87 int. return (Erway kick)  
(OS) Cassady 10 run (Kriss kick)  
(N) Jon McWilliams 11 pass Erway (Erway kick)  
(OS) Cassady 1 run (Kriss kick)  
(OS) Frank Ellwood 1 run (Kriss kick)

Attendance: 80,171



### DO YOU REMEMBER?

- ▶ Woody Hayes was in his fifth season as Ohio State's coach.
- ▶ Hayes was known for having little use for passing. Three things can happen when you throw the ball, he said, and two of the three were bad. The Buckeyes attempted only three passes against Nebraska, one complete and one intercepted.
- ▶ Huskers who weren't in the game sat on the bench instead of kneeling, as Bill Glassford had required against Hawaii the previous Saturday. The Big Seven had notified Glassford during the week of the Ohio State game that conference rules required players to sit.
- ▶ Nebraska played at Ohio State again in 1956, losing 34-7. Those are the only times the schools have played football against each other.



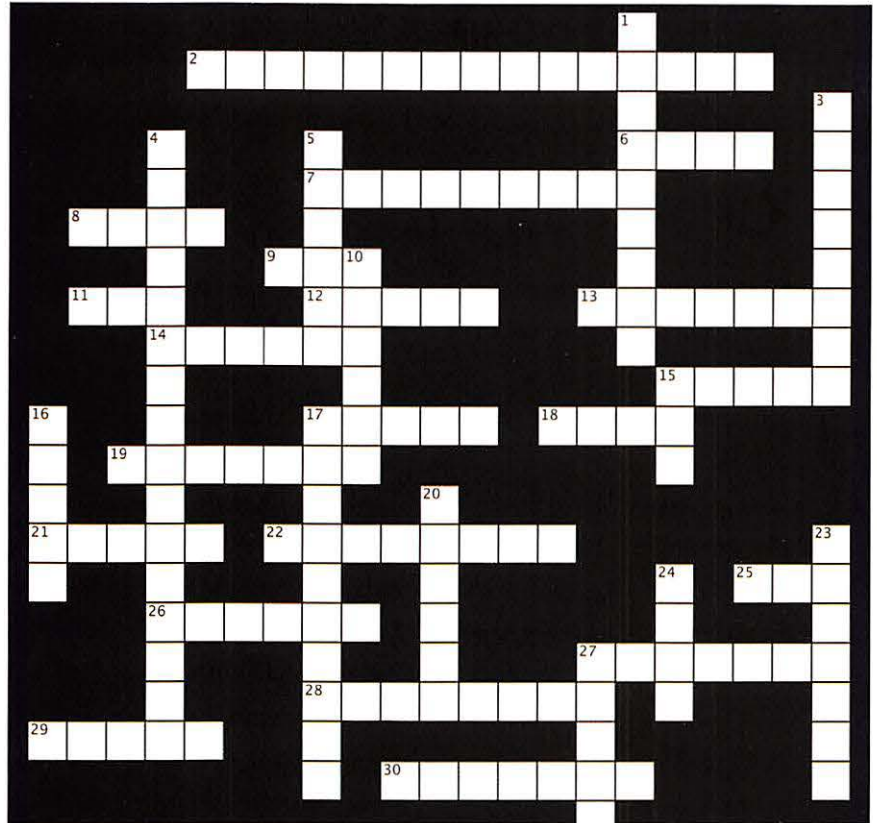
# CROSSWORD & TRIVIA

## ACROSS

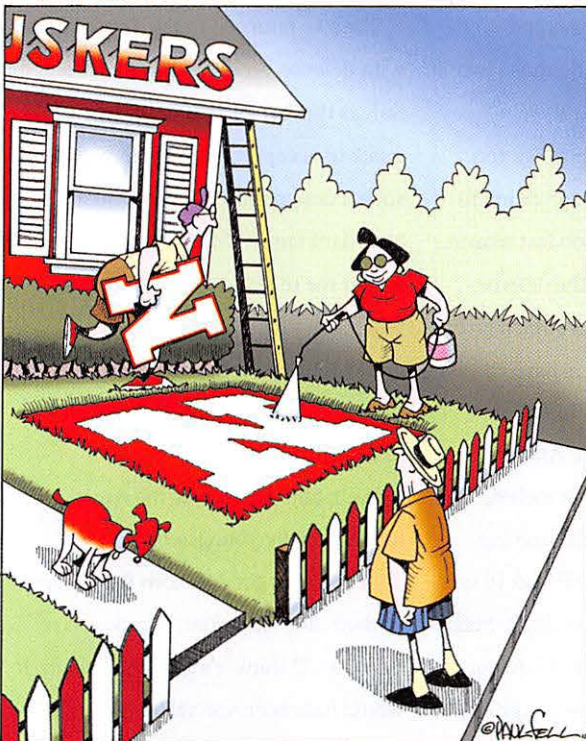
2. Opponent in 2010 opener
6. Network for NU-Kansas State telecast
7. Defensive back on Bednarik Award watch list
8. Wide receiver on Biletnikoff Award watch list
9. Only NU player to win Bednarik Award
11. 2009-10 male Big 12 Athlete of the Year
12. Oct. 16 opponent
13. Prince Amukamara's home state
14. Head strength coach
15. Ndamukong Suh's NFL team
17. Defensive lineman on Bednarik Award watch list
18. NU's rating in USA Today preseason coaches' poll
19. NU's bowl game after 2009 season
21. Jared Crick's hometown
22. Oct. 30 opponent
25. Network for NU-Washington telecast
26. 1997 Outland Trophy winner
27. Recruiting coordinator
28. Media's preseason pick to win Big 12 North
29. Wears No. 78
30. 2010 College Football Hall of Fame inductee

## DOWN

1. Nickname before Cornhuskers
  3. Wears No. 68
  4. 2010 Homecoming opponent
  5. Wears No. 58
  10. 2009 special teams MVP
  15. Quarterback who had offseason surgery on throwing arm
  16. Preseason Big 12 Defensive Co-Player of the Year
  17. Roy Helu's home state
  20. Only NU player to win Maxwell Award
  23. First-team preseason All-Big 12 selection
  24. Running back on Maxwell Award watch list
  27. NU's bowl game after 2008 season
- Answers will appear in the Sept. 11 issue



## HUSKERNUTZ



HERBERT AND LAVINIA ARE GEARING UP FOR A BRAND-NEW HUSKER SEASON.

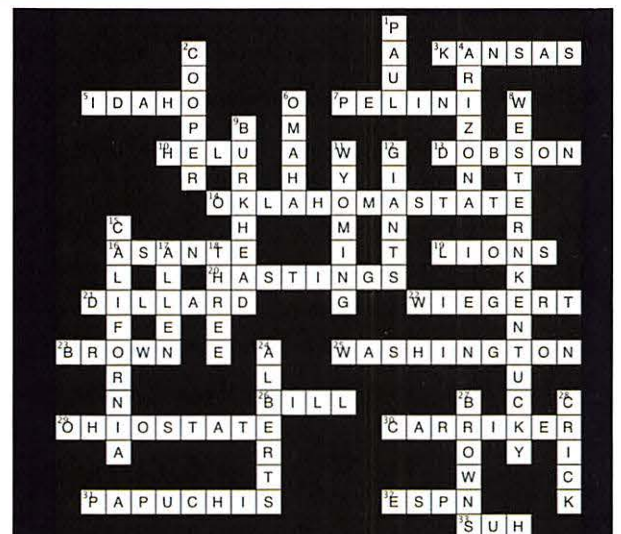
## BRAIN BUSTER

One of these Cornhusker quarterbacks was not a captain: Terry Luck, Mark Mauer, Turner Gill, Steve Taylor, Gerry Gdowski, Mickey Joseph, Tommie Frazier. Can you name him?

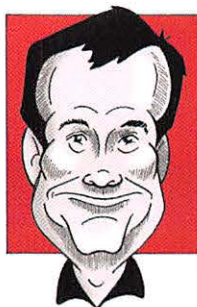
Answer will appear in our next issue

JUNE/JULY ANSWER: 1965

## JUNE/JULY SOLUTION







## THE FINAL WORD

BY MIKE BABCOCK

# Crick more than scribbles and smudges

**AFTER AN HOUR** or so in the August sun, his signature deteriorated. Writer's cramp set in, compounded by a jammed thumb suffered during summer conditioning.

Instead of "Jared Crick" the name was scribbles and smudges, alongside 94.

Except that the 4 also looked like a 9.

Fans asked Crick if his jersey number was 99?

"I can't make a 4 when my hand's tired," he explained.

Then the black ink in his Sharpie started to run dry. So a couple of young fans near the end of the line passing in front of the defensive-tackles table on Fan Day got an autograph half ink and half the white-gray rubbing of plastic from which the pen was made.

Even so, Crick patiently signed and interacted with Cornhusker fans young and old. And later that day, following the first practice of fall camp, he patiently answered a reporter's questions. "That's part of our job of being a student-athlete, addressing the media," Crick said.

Not every player and coach would agree. But Crick is as generous with his time as he is reluctant to talk about himself and his accomplishments – oh yes, and his potential.

The Sporting News rated the Nebraska junior the top player in college football in its 2010 annual. Big 12-area media

voted him the pre-season conference co-defensive player of the year.

And considering the number of pre-season watch lists that include his name, Crick could reprise Ndamukong Suh's national award-collecting spree of a year ago.

Crick would still have a season of eligibility remaining, assuming he follows Suh's lead and returns for his senior season. Or he could leave early for the NFL, though that "really hasn't crossed my mind at all," he said a week into fall camp. "Right now, my only concern is just getting better during camp.

"I may stay for my senior year, but my main priority is winning a national championship with this team and graduating. So I've got to do those two things first."

Graduating was a Suh priority, too. But "national championship" didn't fit in a reasonable conversation last season, even with him anchoring the defense. Now it's not too much of a stretch given the respect the Cornhuskers have earned in just two seasons under Bo Pelini.

That was reflected in the Associated Press pre-season poll, which included Nebraska at No. 8. The last time the Cornhuskers were in the AP Top 10 was the second week of October 2003. Pelini was Frank Solich's 35-year-old defensive coordinator. And Crick was a high school freshman.

Crick didn't grow up in Cozad. His

family moved there before he began middle school. But his parents were from the Cozad area, and he was raised a Cornhusker fan. He watched Nebraska games on television and imagined himself wearing scarlet and cream. When he was in high school his Cornhusker role model was defensive end Adam Carriker.

Nebraska wasn't in the national picture during Crick's high school career. His sophomore and junior years the Cornhuskers weren't in the AP regular-season rankings at all. His senior year, they were ranked no higher than No. 17, and then only for one week.

They've returned to the Top 10 now with defense. And Crick has succeeded Suh as the face of that defense. He is quick to accept the responsibility of such a designation while dismissing the attendant fame. "My parents always taught me to be humble, no matter what," he said.

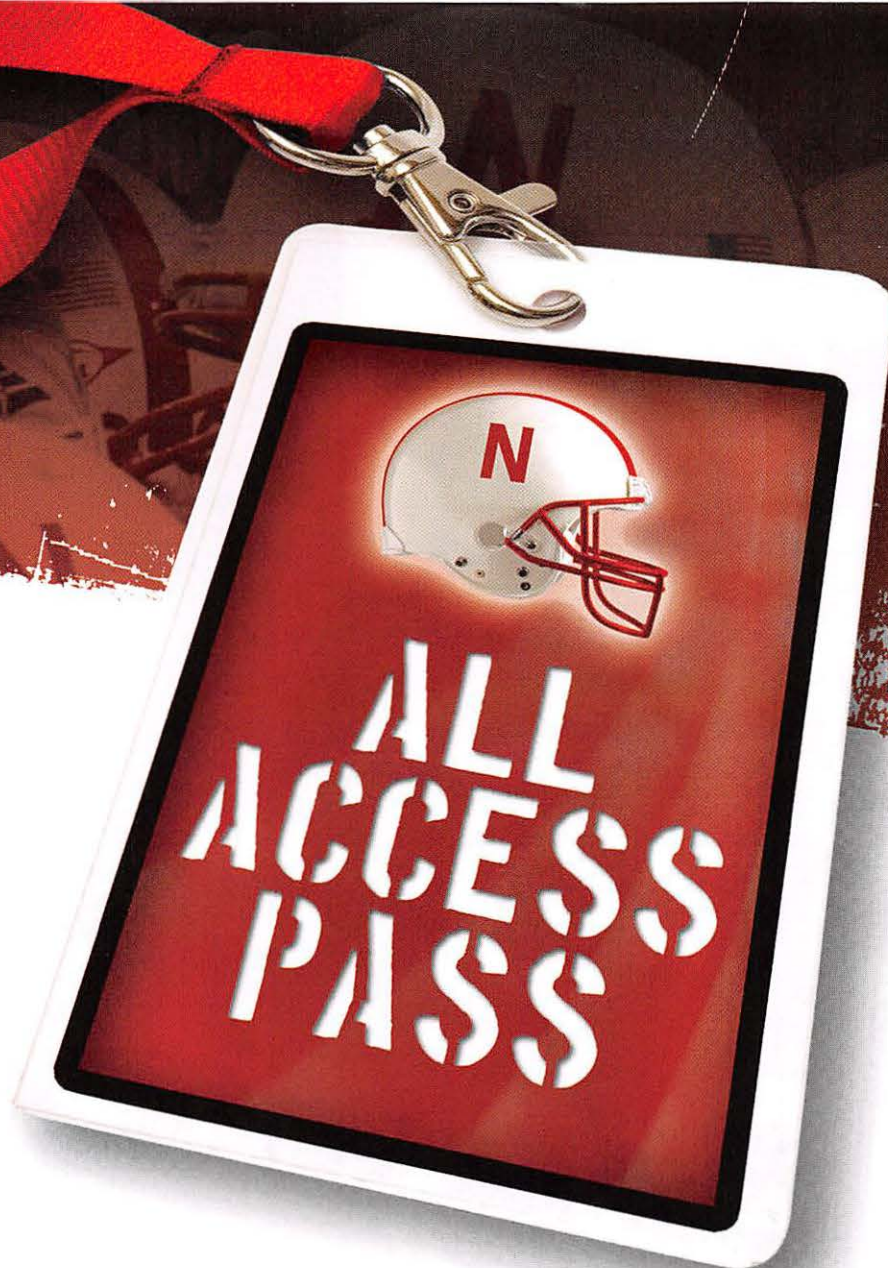
"As long as I make my parents proud and my teammates proud that's all I really care about."

Well, fans are part of the equation, too, especially youngsters.

"I think it's good for kids to see some of their idols that close," Crick said of Fan Day. "I think it's special for them. It would have been special for me at their age."

Scribbles and smudges were fine. **N**





# YOU'RE IN.

PRACTICE REPORTS

SEAN CALLAHAN ANALYSIS

HOME GAME HIGHLIGHTS

POST GAME PRESS CONFERENCES

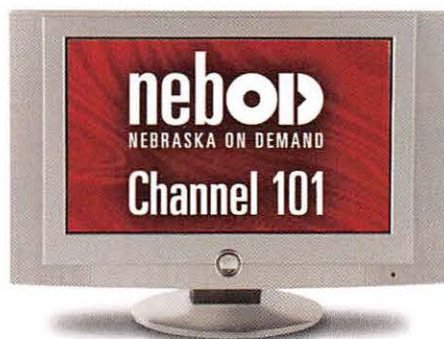
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